

Killing suspect may have used back door

NORFOLK (AP)—A man suspected of killing a psychiatrist in his office at a state-run mental hospital might have entered through a back door, a state senator said Sunday.

Leland Klein of Battle Creek said an employee at the Norfolk Regional Center told him that is what happened. Klein said the suspect apparently walked unimpeded up to the second-floor administrative offices Friday.

The suspect carried two pistols, a gym bag full of ammunition and several 12-inch road flares. A 69-year-old Ohio man has been arrested in the case, but no formal charges have been filed.

The acting director of the Department of Public Institutions, James L. Wiley, told the Omaha World-Herald that the suspect walked into the second-floor offices and asked to see Dr. George Bartholow of Omaha. The doctor, who was clinical director at the center, agreed to see him, Wiley said.

Wiley could not immediately be reached Sunday about security at the regional centers, including centers in Lincoln and Hastings.

A spokeswoman for the Norfolk center said none of the five entrances to the center were locked during business hours before Bartholow was killed. Linda Sparr said all but the main entrance have been locked at all hours since the incident.

Sparr said guards were posted after the incident, but had not been used before.

The regional center treats some court-ordered patients and others who come in for help, Sparr said. Patients are monitored, and their stay at the regional center becomes less restrictive as doctors track their

status, she said.

Klein declined to name the employee he spoke to, and Klein said he had not checked with authorities about what the employee told him.

Klein said he was concerned about security at the center and hoped to find out more at a meeting Sunday at the center.

"I think when you're a psychiatric ward you might want to have more security," Klein said.

Gov. Ben Nelson, police, center officials and Klein planned to meet to discuss those issues.

Sparr said she could not comment directly on how the suspect entered the building. Nebraska State Patrol spokesman Jeff Hanson said the state patrol was investigating and would turn its findings over to Madison County Attorney Joe Smith. Smith could not be reached for comment Sunday.

Meanwhile, the suspect's ex-wife said Sunday that her former husband suffers from schizophrenia and manic depression.

Yvonne Keylor, 68, said in a telephone interview from her home in Girard, Ohio, that her husband had been treated for mental illness in Nebraska. She said they divorced more than 20 years ago and the last she knew her husband had been living in Toronto, Ohio.

She said when he does not take his medication, his condition worsens. She said her ex-husband had been a heavy drinker, and that might have triggered his mental illness.

A daughter of Bartholow's, Debra Loucks of Omaha said she had been told the suspect might have been one of her father's patients years ago in Omaha at a Veterans Administration facility.

Neighbors conduct cleanups

Grand Island pays for waste disposal, gives advice to residents

GRAND ISLAND (AP)—It took awhile, but residents of a Grand Island neighborhood have pulled together in a cleanup effort.

"There were flowers planted in the summertime that were never seen blooming before," said Belinda Wessels, co-chairwoman of the neighborhood homeowners association.

The city has supported neighborhood cleanups by paying for hauling and disposal of waste and providing technical advice.

City Attorney Charlie Cuypers said such cooperation has helped the city learn what residents need and residents learn what the city plans to do.

"You develop a cohesive group that can express a common idea of what they want their neighborhood to look like," Cuypers said.

The ball started rolling in Wessels' Indian Acres neighborhood on the west edge of Grand Island after a burned-out trailer that had been in the area finally was moved out. Volunteers cleaned off the lot and sold the land.

"It was an eyesore," Wessels said. The property had been vandalized and a number of junked cars had been abandoned on it.

"I don't know why they picked our area, but I'm glad they did."

BELINDA WESSELS
Grand Island resident

Cuypers attended the September 1995 town hall meeting that planted the idea of forming the Indian Acres Homeowners Association. He said several code violations were consistent around the neighborhood, and residents shared some common concerns. Since then, Cuypers has attended nearly all of the association's monthly meetings.

Wessels credited the city for calling the town hall meeting that led to the association's formation.

"I don't know why they picked our area, but I'm glad they did," she said.

Wessels said residents hoped to continue working with the city on projects.

"Paving and sewer are big items that would help the area look better," she said.

Neighbors also encourage each other to pick up their property and correct code violations, but the city has the association's backing if it needs to enforce its laws, Cuypers said.

"If we had other neighborhoods in town that have an interest in doing this, our office would be tickled pink to help them," he said.

Other activities sponsored by neighborhood associations in Grand Island have included candidates forums for City Council and the legislature and benefit suppers for families facing financial hardship.

High winds wreak havoc in Nebraska

From The Associated Press

A winter storm that threatened Nebraska's Panhandle never materialized, but tornadoes and high winds wreaked havoc over the weekend before the weather settled down Sunday.

Southerly winds gusting to 51 mph blew tree limbs into power lines in Omaha on Saturday, causing more than 350 scattered power outages. Downed tree limbs blocked about 25 streets.

Trees and power lines also fell as a result of high winds in Lincoln. One tree tore a hole into a house. Siding was

stripped from the top of Memorial Stadium, but the big red "N" was spared.

The wind sent flames across a cornfield near Lincoln and Seward. Fillmore, Jefferson and Saline counties reported similar brush fires.

A tornado on Saturday demolished and damaged buildings near Spencer Dam on the Niobrara River north of O'Neill, and power outages occurred in the same area. A separate tornado near Bassett knocked a pickup truck off a hill, with the sole occupant emerging bruised and shaken.

Nebraska's forecast called for partly sunny and warmer conditions

Monday with highs in the 50s and 60s, the National Weather Service said. The extended forecast called for a chance of rain Tuesday with highs in the 50s, and dry conditions in the west Wednesday but a chance of rain in the east. Highs Wednesday were expected to be in the 30s in the west to the 40s in the east.

A chance of snow in the west was expected to return to the forecast Thursday, with a chance of rain in the east. Highs were expected to be in the lower 30s in the west to around 50 in the southeast.



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