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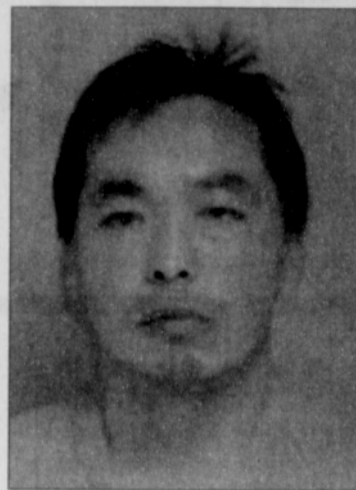


Equality Debate

Politicians, celebrities and community leaders rally in support of the trauma unit at Martin Luther King Jr./Drew Medical Center in South Los Angeles. A grass-roots campaign is framing civil rights and equal access to vital medical services as key issues for keeping the unit open. The trauma unit was created in the aftermath of the Watts Riot. (AP photo)

Hunter Guns Down Crowd

Shooting may be racially motivated



Chai Vang

(AP) — A man suspected in the killings of six hunters in Wisconsin told investigators he began firing after he was shot at first and some of the victims called him racially derogatory names, according to documents filed Tuesday.

A judge set bail at \$2.5 million for Chai Vang, 36, of St. Paul, Minn., who is suspected in the killings Sunday of six deer hunters and the wounding of two others.

Vang, a Hmong immigrant from Laos, was arrested Sunday about four hours after the shootings as he emerged from the woods with his empty SKS 7.62mm semiautomatic rifle.

Sawyer County Sheriff Jim Meier said a dispute over Vang's use of a tree stand - a raised platform used by hunters - on private property preceded the gunfire.

A hunter approached Vang to tell him he was on private property, and Vang started to leave as other hunters approached, the statement

said. Vang said the hunters surrounded him, and some started calling him racial slurs.

Vang said he started walking away but looked back to see the first hunter point his rifle at him and then fire a shot that hit the ground 30 to 40 feet behind him, the statement said.

That's when Vang told investigators he started firing at the group, and some fell to the ground and others tried to run away, according to the statement.

Five people died at the scene and a sixth died Monday in a hospital.

Clinton Library Opens

(AP)—Top Clinton administration officials, both Presidents Bush, rock stars and ordinary admirers of Bill Clinton turned out to pay homage to the former president at the opening of the Clinton Presidential Center library and museum in Little Rock, Ark.

"The thing I want most is for people to come to this library," Clinton said Thursday at an outdoor celebration in pouring rain, "is to see that public service is noble and important."

"I believe the job of a president is to understand and explain the

time in which he serves," he said, "to set forth a vision of where we need to go and a strategy of how to get there, and then to pursue it with all his mind and heart."

Clinton, President Bush and former presidents George H.W. Bush and Jimmy Carter had earlier taken the stage while the U.S. Air Force Concert Band played "Hail to the Chief."

Clinton's colleagues then paid tribute to his tenure.

The only other living former president, Gerald Ford, 91, was too frail to attend.



Former President Clinton and Sen. Hillary Clinton watch the crowd and procession of VIPs during the formal dedication of the Clinton Presidential Center.

Daughter's Arms Severed

(AP)—With a calm, dispassionate voice and a hymn playing in the background, Dena Schlosser confessed to the unthinkable, telling a 911 operator she'd cut off the arms of her baby girl.

The woman was sitting in her living room covered with blood when police arrived Monday. Her

nearly 11-month-old daughter lay fatally injured in a crib in a bedroom of the family's apartment in Plano, Texas. The child died shortly afterward at a hospital.

Police have charged the 35-year-old mother.

Schlosser, who had a history of postpartum depression, had been

investigated on child neglect allegations earlier this year, but Texas Child Protective Services had recently closed a seven-month investigation, concluding that Schlosser did not pose a risk to her children. Neighbors said she seemed to be a loving, attentive mother.

Racism Motivates Hate Crimes

(AP)—Over 7,400 hate crime incidents occurred nationwide last year, more than half of them motivated by racial prejudice most often against black people, the FBI reported Monday.

Hate crimes motivated by anti-black racial bias totaled 2,548 in 2003, more than double such crimes against all other racial groups combined. There were 3,150 black victims in these cases, including four who were mur-

dered, according to the annual FBI report.

The overall total of 7,489 hate crime incidents reported in 2003 was slightly above the number reported in 2002. Nearly two-thirds of the crimes involved in such cases are intimidation, vandalism or property destruction.

The report shows that crimes categorized as anti-Islamic remained at the about same level in 2003 - 149 crimes - as the year

before. By far the most hate crimes based on religion were directed at Jews, with 927 incidents in 2003, about the same as in 2002.

The report also found more than 1,200 hate crimes based on sexual orientation, including 783 against male homosexuals. That included six murders.

The FBI hate crimes report is drawn from information submitted by more than 11,900 law enforcement agencies around the country.


Tests Negative in Mad Cow Case

(AP)—No sign of mad cow disease was found in an animal the Agriculture Department had singled out for followup tests, officials said Tuesday. Initial screenings last week had raised the possibility of a new case of the disease in the United States.

A more definitive test at the National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa, came back negative, the officials said. The announcement was a relief to the U.S. beef industry, which is still trying to recover from the nation's first case of the disease last December.

Officials did not say where the cow came from or why it was suspected of being diseased.

The initial screenings had produced what officials said were "inconclusive" results, but the possibility of a second case had rattled cattle producers, meatpackers and hamburger chains.



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