

Cartouche Face & Body offers quiet spa atmosphere

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KAREN CASSIDY/THE STATE NEWS

The State News

4 CHARGED IN 1999 ARSON

Investigation comes to a close after 8 years; MSU officials react

By Kelly House
THE STATE NEWS

After more than eight years of investigation, police and MSU officials announced Tuesday the arrests of four suspects in connection with the 1999 arson of Agriculture Hall.

Detroit residents Frank Brian Ambrose, 33, Aren Bernard Burthwick, 27, and Stephanie Lynne Fultz, 27, and Cincinnati resident Marie Jeanette Mason, 46, each face four counts of conspiracy to commit arson, aggravated arson and arson in connection with the Agriculture Hall incident and a Jan. 1, 2000, arson of commercial logging equipment near Mesick, Mich.

The incident at Agriculture Hall caused more than \$1 million in damage.

If convicted, the charges against each member of the group carry a minimum penalty of five years and a maximum penalty of 40 years in prison.

Officials from MSU police, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Michigan and the FBI were involved in the investigation.

"We certainly hope we've sent the message to these folks that time will not deter us," said Andrew Arena, the FBI special agent in charge of the case.

The indictment states that all four suspects helped plan the arson of Agriculture Hall and that Mason and Ambrose executed it. It also states that all four suspects carried out the Mesick arson.

MSU police Chief Jim Dunlap said officers conducted the investigation across 10 states in search of suspects.

"We've been working on it nearly every day for the past eight years," Dunlap said.

None of the suspects have any prior university affiliation, and none have any prior arrests, Dunlap said.

The arson targeted the Agriculture Biotechnology Support Project, or ABSP, a program that researches the use of genetically modified plants for use in Africa and other developing parts of the world, MSU President Lou Anna K. Simon said.

Shortly after the arson, an



Stan Clayton of Burton Brothers cleans the rubble of the Institute of International Agriculture's offices in Agriculture Hall on Jan. 13, 2000, after a suspected arson damaged the rooms.

STATE NEWS FILE PHOTO

"It was more than the destruction of property, it was an assault on the core value of free and open inquiry at a research university."

Lou Anna K. Simon, MSU President

environmental group known as Earth Liberation Front took responsibility for the fire. The group is considered a threat by law enforcement officials because of its past involvement in acts of ecoterrorism.

The fire was started in the office of the ABSP director Catherine Ives and caused damage

to the third and fourth floors of the northeast wing of Agriculture Hall.

Following the arson, the ABSP offices and some neighboring offices were relocated while repairs were made. It took about a year for the dam-

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INVESTIGATION

MISSING ITEMS COULD SUGGEST FOUL PLAY IN COTTER'S DEATH

By Kelly House
THE STATE NEWS

Items missing from Rylan Cotter's body could indicate an element of foul play in how she died, her mother said Tuesday.



Cotter

One of the items, which Nancy Cotter declined to identify, was later recovered miles away from where her daughter's body was found Jan. 9 at Brassie Golf Course in Chesterton, Ind. The missing belongings raise speculation about whether the international relations junior was being pursued prior to her death.

"There are mitigating factors as to was there or was there not a robbery and/or assault that was perpetrated against my daughter," Nancy Cotter said.

Chesterton police suspended the criminal investigation into Rylan Cotter's death Fri-

day after a coroner ruled the death a suicide.

Nancy Cotter said although she understands why police would rule the death a suicide, she disagrees with their actions.

Chesterton police Lt. Dave Cincoski, the lead investigator of the case, declined to comment on case specifics, but said police continue to test evidence not related to the cause of death.

"The investigation, right now, is only suspended for the cause and manner of death," he said. "It is not suspended for any other aspect of the investigation."

He wouldn't comment on the items missing from Rylan Cotter's body, which was found 28 feet from the base of an electrical tower on the golf course. He also wouldn't comment on how police determined she landed in that spot or how she knew the tower was there.

Porter County Coroner Victoria Deppe said Cotter fell backward from the tow-

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EAST LANSING

Council talks club options, considers greek district

By Brian McVicar
THE STATE NEWS

The East Lansing City Council postponed its decision to weigh in on the redevelopment of The Dollar Nightclub.



Loomis

East Lansing Mayor Vic Loomis said the council needs to examine its long-term plan for the area before it reaches a decision.

"What's the vision — both short term and long term — going to be for this corridor," he said. "It's a function of timing right now."

East Lansing doesn't have the authority to authorize a redevelopment because the club is on the city's border.

Since January 2007, The Dollar Nightclub, 3411 E. Michigan Ave., has been vacant.

But with two developers competing to redevelop the property, the area could be on its way to rejuvenation.

Eric Schertzing, chairman of the Ingham County Land Bank, said two redevelopment proposals for the former club have been introduced.

One proposal calls for the demolition of the building and the creation of apartments, and the other to redevelop it as a res-

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ENVIRONMENT

Heavy rain, snow make Red Cedar River rise

By Jeff Kanan
THE STATE NEWS

East Lansing's foul winter has been more than fair to the Red Cedar River this year as water volume levels have blasted past monthly averages.

According to data from the U.S. Geological Survey, or USGS, Red Cedar River water volume levels for January reached the third-highest peak since 1975, followed by higher-than-average February levels.

Heavy amounts of precipitation combined with temperature fluctuations directly raised the water levels, said Steve Blumer, a hydrologist at the USGS Michigan Water Science Center.

"Through the winter we've had a number of snowmelt situations where we've gone from a snowpack to dry grass," Blumer said. "And due to this, I think we've seen the river flow at a high this winter."

Water volume levels for the Red Cedar River were about three times the monthly average for January and more than 10 percent higher than 2007, according to the survey.

In February, volume levels measured about 60 percent higher than the monthly average.

Blumer said he expects the water levels to continue increasing during March and April as winter ground moisture reaches the rivers.

"Typically in March and April we have snowmelts," Blumer said. "And when it snows and rains, there's a significant amount of runoff."

Most of 2007 was characterized by Red Cedar River water volume levels alternating above and below the monthly averages, according to USGS data. While rising levels haven't led to serious flooding, officials have been forced to close several Red Cedar River valves to prevent overflow into local subdivisions, said Randy Abbott, draining maintenance supervisor at the Ingham County Drain Commissioner's office.

Robert McCann, a spokesman

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ROLANDO PALACIO/THE STATE NEWS

Kinesiology freshman Aaron Beger walks under the Farm Lane bridge while heading for class. With the snow melting, increased water levels in the Red Cedar River will prevent Beger from taking the river pathway.

BRAIN POWER

E.L. children get a hands-on opportunity to learn about the brain from MSU professors and students. 3A



Weather

Partly cloudy

High 39° | Low 30°

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