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THURSDAY
FEBRUARY 27, 2003

Police chief: Testimony during handgun hearing was misleading

■ **Apple Valley chief takes issue with what woman said to committee**

“I don’t know how she (the witness) did. She never lied.”

— State Representative Lynda Boudreau, sponsor of legislation



By **MATTHEW COULSEY**
Staff Writer

FARIBAULT — Dramatic testimony given by an Apple Valley woman who said she was raped and nearly abducted, but then was denied a permit to carry a concealed handgun, may have misled Minnesota legislators, one police chief says.

The woman testified before a House committee Feb. 11 in favor of Conceal and Carry legislation authored by State Rep. Lynda Boudreau’s (R-Faribault).

Boudreau’s bill would reform the way permits to carry handguns are issued in Minnesota. Currently, backers of the bill say, local sheriffs and chiefs of police have too much leeway in deciding who may legally carry a handgun. The Boudreau bill would require that concealed weapons permits be issued to most trained, mentally competent and law-abiding citizens.

The testimony in question was given Feb. 11 before the House Civil Law Committee. She spoke out in favor of the Boudreau initiative, saying she was denied a concealed weapons permit by the Apple Valley Police Department. She told the committee that she requested the handgun permit because she had been abducted and raped and, on another occasion, taken by a

driver to a location other than where she had specified.

The woman told the committee members that she had been followed home by a stranger, dragged into the woods, and then was brutally raped. In another alleged incident, she testified, a taxi driver attempted to take her to a location other than where she requested, but she was successful in stopping the cab by using her lipstick container as weapon. As a result, she told the committee, she applied for a permit to carry a handgun. But the permit was denied in 1999 by then-Apple Valley Police Chief Bruce Erickson.

TESTIMONY
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Diane Winkels of the Rice County Public Health Nursing Office, shows her bandage after receiving a smallpox vaccination. (Kelli Wencil / Daily News)

Vaccinations begin for health care workers

By **PAULINE SCHREIBER**
Staff Writer

FARIBAULT — Rice County Public Health Nurse Diane Winkels didn’t have to think for long about whether she’d volunteer to receive a smallpox vaccination.

She is one of several Rice County Public Health nurses who willingly stepped forth to be vaccinated against smallpox as part of the first phase of a nationwide preparation plan against the threat of a smallpox attack.

“I talked to my husband, Steve, about it, and he really couldn’t see why I wouldn’t get vaccinated. Part of being a public health nurse is concern for people’s health,” Winkels said. “Being protected from smallpox, I could help patients if there would be an outbreak.”

Winkels and a few other Rice County Public Health nurses went to a regional distribution site in Rochester on Feb. 13 to receive their doses. All of them had received smallpox vaccinations as children and have had only the normal reactions to the vaccine — an itch around the site of the vaccination, blisters, and a scab. It takes two to three weeks before the scab falls off, she explained, during which time a bandage is worn over the vaccination site.

Dr. David McIntyre of Faribault also recently received a smallpox inoculation in Rochester, along with several other doctors and nurses in the community recruited through District One Hospital.

“All of us certainly hope there is never an outbreak of smallpox. If there was, however, it’s vital that doctors, nurses and other health care professionals be protected to help treat

patients with the disease,” McIntyre said.

He said health care workers who volunteer to receive smallpox inoculations are carefully screened. Anyone with a skin condition, chronic medical condition, weakened immune system, or women who are pregnant or nursing are rejected.

Colleen LaVine, infection control manager for District One Hospital, said that the number of hospital employees who have received smallpox inoculations now numbers six, but is expected to grow to 18 soon.

At first, she said, “there was a lot more of a fear factor than I thought there would be” about the vaccinations. But as workers see their colleagues coming through with flying colors, “they want to do their part.”

“District One Hospital has four negative pressure rooms meant to care for patients with contagious diseases. Many rural hospitals do not have these types of rooms,” LaVine said. “If there was a smallpox outbreak, District One would have the facilities to care for a limited number of patients. Because of that, the hospital felt it was vital to find volunteers to be inoculated against smallpox.”

Naturally occurring smallpox was eradicated worldwide in 1977, McIntyre said.

“Few physicians of today have dealt with the disease. Because of that, there needs to be education of physicians and nurses, in both how to identify the disease and then how to treat it.”

Winkels and several other Rice County Public Health nurses attended a workshop on the day they received their inoculations to learn how to give the vaccine.



A vehicle is pictured parked the wrong way on Central Avenue Wednesday afternoon. Faded stall markings and the new flow of traffic has apparently left some motorists confused about how to park on the city’s main street. (Hans Madsen / Daily News)

Downtown parking still confuses some

By **JON MINNICK**
Staff Writer

FARIBAULT — Crossing old lines is creating new problems in downtown Faribault.

The November reopening of Central Avenue to two-way traffic opened a number of opportunities for downtown consumers and businesses.

But one of the problems created by the change back to two-way traffic is parking. Because the street was previously open to one-way traffic only, diagonal parking lines were painted for vehicles coming from one direction on both sides of the road.

When the traffic change was made last fall, it was too late to repaint permanent lines to accommodate parking from traffic flowing in two directions. City employees instead took temporary measures, painting over the existing lines and painting new ones for the two-way traffic. Those lines are virtually gone now, however, and Public Works Director

Dave Simons said repainting in current weather conditions would do little to help.

“The paint won’t stick in this weather,” Simons said. “It would run and create a mess on cars.”

Simons said the city plans to use a process called sealcoating to recover the blacktop on Central Avenue and permanently “restripe” the parking lines when warmer temperatures arrive. Consistent temperatures in, at very least, the 50s, are required to do so, Simons said.

“This project wasn’t ready until November,” Simons said. “The project timeline couldn’t allow us to do that [last fall].”

In the meantime, the city has taken a number of other steps to try to inform drivers about the parking situation. Signs reading “Two-Way Traffic” and “Diagonal Parking” have been placed on each block of Central Avenue.

Another idea the city considered was taping temporary lines to distinguish the new parking stalls from the old ones. However,

Simons said temperatures are still too low for tape to be effective.

Faribault Police Chief Mike Lewis said instinct is a factor that should not be overlooked when trying to park downtown.

“I think common sense would tell you that you don’t park on the wrong side of the road,” Lewis said.

Lewis said violators of parking regulations not only endanger other drivers, but they are also breaking the law.

“If you’re going southbound on Central Avenue, you don’t turn left to park. It’s against the law,” Lewis said. “If someone does that and gets in an accident, they’re going to be at fault in the accident.”

Although the city continues to look into possible options, Simons said crews may just have to wait on the weather.

“Unfortunately, it may be something we have to live with,” Simons said. “What we need are good, consistent warm temperatures.”

New budget forecast due today

ST. PAUL (AP) — Is Minnesota’s budget predicament getting worse or are brighter days approaching?

A new economic forecast that state leaders will receive today holds the answer. It will say whether the projected \$4.2 billion deficit through June 2005 has ballooned or if it’s deflated some.

One of the few people who knew its contents Wednesday, Department of Finance Commissioner Dan McElroy, wasn’t saying much.

“Nobody knows outside of the department,” McElroy said. He will brief Gov. Tim Pawlenty around breakfast and give the

public the prognosis at lunchtime.

The twice-a-year report gauges the amount of money the state is expected to bring in over the next couple of years versus the amount it is slated to send out.

The number is important because it is the target legislators and Pawlenty must hit when crafting a final budget plan. Minnesota’s constitution requires a balanced budget.

If the projected deficit grows, Pawlenty will have to present legislators with more proposed cuts. If it’s better, he might be able to back off some of his earlier recommendations or sock more in reserve.

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