

The Muskegon Chronicle

Muskegon, Michigan
Thursday, March 23, 1978

Today Forty-four pages — 20 cents
Pages 1-10

DIGGS INDICTMENT?—Two Washington radio stations report Rep. Charles Diggs of Michigan will be named in an indictment today alleging he falsely inflated salaries of staffers so the extra money could be used to pay his bills. Page 2.

HOFFA CONNECTION—Some federal investigators believe the slaying of a New Jersey Teamsters official may prompt people involved in the Hoffa disappearance to come forward and seek federal protection. Page 2.

WALLENDAS' DETROIT PLUNGE—Detroiters saw two members of the Wallenda troupe die 18 years ago when their pyramid collapsed. Page 3.

Public Affairs

CHILD ABUSE—One-hundred and twenty-five nurses, social workers, mental health workers and doctors attended a workshop on child abuse and neglect at Hackley Medical Center on Wednesday. Page 11.

People

EASTER CONCERT—The West Shore Symphony Orchestra will present a concert at Frauenthal Center on Easter. Page 23.

TUGBOAT LIFE—Brenda McLeod and many of her all-female deck crew have become disenchanted with their duty aboard a tugboat. Page 23.

Sports/Recreation

HONORED—Muskegon Heights Tigers' Robert Kitchen and Cedric Scott were named to both the Chronicle's All-Area team as well as first team AP All-State. Page 33.

Beg your pardon

The Today Section index of Wednesday's Chronicle carried an item on the recovery of the body of a small boy missing for three months. The story did not appear in all copies of Wednesday's Chronicle. Today's Chronicle carries the story on Page 6.

Wednesday's daily lottery number 333.

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For circulation department service after 7 p.m. daily and after 10 a.m. Sunday, call 726-1100.

Friends, kin mourn death of area couple

"She just wanted to die. She had been miserable for a long time," said the family doctor of Lyman and Molly Briggs.

Police were called to 183 Eugene Tuesday afternoon where they found the embracing bodies of the dead couple.

Police concluded that a grief-stricken Lyman Briggs, 66, shot his 56-year-old, cancer-riddled wife and then turned the gun on himself. Each had a .32 caliber wound to the right temple, police said.

A double funeral service for the couple was set for 10:30 a.m. Saturday at the Clock Chapel in Muskegon.

Dr. Richard A. Huntley said Mrs. Briggs' life expectancy was a few weeks at best. She had recently refused further medical treatment. She had been ravaged for several years with spreading breast cancer, he said.

"He had a lot to live for, but he apparently couldn't bear to be without her," said Huntley. "Everyone has to make that decision on his own."

A surviving son, Tyler, 24, said his

mother and father were deeply in love from the time they were married in 1945.

His father had seen his mother suffer for a long time, he said.

A note in his father's pocket read, "I would rather spend an eternity in hell than to see Molly live a life of hell."

"I don't want to call this a murder case," said Norton Shores Police Chief Charles Curtis. "He obviously loved her a lot."

He said a routine investigation would be conducted.

A neighbor characterized the couple as quiet people who "didn't drink, smoke or hurt anything."

Gerri Cook of 203 Eugene said Mrs. Briggs was always snapping photos of neighborhood youngsters. "Then the pictures would suddenly show up in our mailboxes," she said.

"She never complained about her illness," she said. "Every neighbor should be that way. They were precious."

Mason gunman gives up; couple believed hostages



Gary Hubbel

By MARK SILVA
Chronicle staff writer

BASS LAKE — A 24-year-old Bass Lake man, who fired a shotgun and a high-powered rifle out of his cabin for four hours this morning, was arrested today after surrendering peacefully to police.

State Police said the man, Gary Hubbel, had been firing indiscriminately from 3 a.m. to 7 a.m. out of his cabin at the corner of Fourth and Latin in Summit Township, southern Mason County.

No one was injured, authorities said.

A young man and young woman in the cabin with Hubbel were also taken into custody after they emerged from the cabin.

Mason County Prosecuting Attorney Martin Holmes said authorities now believe Joseph Card and the unidentified woman were being held hostage by Hubbel.

Holmes said Hubbel had not been charged with any offense.

State Police troopers, joined by Mason and Oceana County sheriff's deputies, handcuffed the three after they came out of the cabin about 8:30 a.m. today.

Hubbel had thrown his shotgun and rifle out the front door of the cabin shortly before he led the other two out to surrender to police.

"I was trying to get some attention," Hubbel said shortly after being handcuffed.

Hubbel said he had done all the shooting.

Trooper Lee Clark said he was the first on the scene at about 3:30 a.m. and Hubbel told him not to come near the cabin.

"He was shooting a lot when we first got there," Clark said. "He told us to 'get the hell out.'"

State Police Lt. Thomas Altland said police talked to Hubbel throughout the morning.

"We tried to talk him out all night," Altland said. "He did a lot of talking, but he didn't make any sense. He threatened to shoot us if we came near."

"We knew he was well fortified," Altland said.

A six-person state police emergency services team arrived about 7 a.m. At 8:15, about 20 state police troopers and sheriff's deputies in bullet-proof



Chronicle photos by John Bundo

Joseph Card and an unidentified woman, who police later decided were hostages, stand outside a Bass Lake cabin where shots had been fired for more than four hours early this morning. The two were handcuffed after they came out of the cabin with another man, Gary Hubbel. Hubbel is being held in connection with the incident.

vests and armed with shotguns surrounded the cabin.

Police told Hubbel through a bullhorn to come out.

Within a few minutes Hubbel threw

his weapons out the door and came out unarmed.

Hubbel and the other man, who could be heard arguing with each other all morning, continued to shout at each other after they were taken into custody, police said.

The young woman was crying while being handcuffed by police.

The three were taken to the Mason County Jail in Ludington for questioning.

Elder Wallenda's death-plunge fails to halt circus tradition

SAN JUAN, Puerto Rico (AP) — Everything was there. The frantic confusion of tumbling acrobats. Sad-faced clowns. Animal acts. Trapeze artists. Everything but the greatest aerialist of all time, Karl Wallenda.

"In the great tradition of the circus, the show goes on," the circus ring announcer said.

Thousands bowed their heads in silence for Wallenda, who had plunged to his death less than six hours earlier Wednesday during a promotional appearance for the Pan American Circus here. It was a natural end to the

73-year-old Wallenda's tragedy-filled life and the close of an acrobatic era.

"It was the way he wanted to go — doing what he loved most," said a circus official who asked not to be named.

Wallenda, carrying a balance pole and wearing beat-up slippers, had walked gracefully as he started across a 300-foot cable strung between the towers of two San Juan resort hotels. Then the wind picked up.

He was still walking, leaning into the wind at a 45-degree angle, when a

gust threw him off-balance at the halfway mark. He was 120 feet above ground.

"The balance pole started going up and down, up and down, like a seesaw," said Gary Williams, a San Juan newspaper photographer who saw the accident.

Wallenda made a desperate attempt to save himself.

"He grabbed the wire with his right hand as he was sitting briefly on the wire. Only his rear end and his hand were on the wire. His feet were in mid-air," Williams recounted.

"And then he fell. He just couldn't hold it."

Wallenda was still clutching the pole when his body struck a taxi, bounced and landed on the pavement.

People fainted and collapsed.

Screams of "Oh my God, oh my God" filled the air.

Police rushed Wallenda to nearby Presbyterian Hospital. The aerialist was dead on arrival at 10:20 a.m.



Lyman and Molly Briggs hold infant grand niece, Brandy Robbins.