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McCarron demonstrates killing

Morton woman testifies she tried to kill daughter days before doing it, says 'It was like a movie'

BY KEVIN SAMPIER
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEKIN — Karen McCarron held a pillow over her autistic daughter's face in an attempt to kill the girl three days before suffocating her with a plastic bag and demonstrated the slaying Friday during her trial.

"It was just a thought," McCarron said as she testified during the fifth day of her murder trial in Tazewell County Circuit Court. "I just picked up a pillow."

McCarron went into 3-year-old Katherine "Katie" McCarron's room May 10, 2006, she said, intending to kill her with

the pillow but removed it from her face after, "not even five seconds," and left the girl's room because she knew what she was doing was wrong.

Three days later, McCarron drove to her mother's empty Morton home with Katie and wrapped a garbage bag around her head until she died.



KAREN McCARRON

Kevin Johnson, chief assistant Tazewell County state's attorney, gave McCarron a garbage bag Friday and had her reenact how she suffocated the girl.

McCarron and Johnson stood together in the courtroom as she put the bag over Johnson's arm, a representation of Katie's head, and demonstrated for jurors how the girl was killed.

"I pushed her down to her knees," McCarron said, and the two sat on the floor

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WTVP makes \$4 million offer

Tuesday deadline looms to repay \$6.9 million debt

BY TERRY BIBO
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — WTVP-TV, Channel 47, has offered \$4 million cash to settle its debts.

If that isn't enough, the station may have to stop broadcasting, and its property will be transferred to its creditors, according to a Jan. 10 letter outlining the final offer.

WTVP has requested an answer by Tuesday, the same deadline Bank of America had given to repay \$6.9 million in debt.

"I've not gotten any indication from anybody yet that we are going dark on Tuesday," station President and CEO Chet Tomczyk said Friday. "But it's early yet."

Bank of America has demanded that license holder Illinois Valley Public Telecommunications Corp. pay the balance on a \$10.3 million loan taken in 2001 to move the station and buy new equipment. In 2005, the bank said it would not renew the letter of credit that enabled the deal, triggering the current crisis. It cited a technical default because the station had not met the level of pledges required, even though the station has made

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'MAN AGAINST BEAST'



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ADAM GERIK/JOURNAL STAR

ABOVE: Saddle bronc rider Billy Dimmitt Jr. of Pierre, S.D., leans back Friday night as he holds onto his horse during the Dodge World's Toughest Bulls and Broncs rodeo at the Peoria Civic Center. BELOW: Travis Vanantwerp, 3, of East Peoria leans forward to watch riders in the rodeo.



World's Toughest rodeo begins two-night stay at Civic Center

BY ED McMENAMIN
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

PEORIA — Simply watching a human body flail wildly on the back of a bucking bronco is too much for some, but for rodeo cowboys it's that adrenaline rush that keeps them coming back.

"It's just you and that horse out there. It's man against beast," said Brad Rudolf, a 27-year-old saddle bronc rider. "But you're not competing against the horse, you're competing with the horse. He's trying to throw you off and you're trying to hold on."

Rudolf competed Friday night at the Dodge World's Toughest Bulls and Broncs rodeo at the Peoria Civic Center. The two-night show resumes at 7:30 tonight.

Rudolf grew up watching his grandfather and uncles ride broncos on the family ranch in Iowa and has been riding professionally since 2000.

"I figured it looked pretty cool," he said.

"Whatever they did I wanted to do, too."

He started in regional competitions and last year, started touring nationally.

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Washington teen crashes into tree that killed friend

Apparent suicide attempt comes days after accident that killed Evan Knoblauch

BY DAVE HANEY AND STEVE STEIN
OF THE JOURNAL STAR

LOWPOINT — A Washington teenager apparently tried to kill himself Thursday night by ramming the same tree that his friend and Washington Community High School classmate fatally crashed into last weekend.

Police said the injured 17-year-old was headed west on Woodford County Road 1950 N about 11 p.m. Thursday when he drove off the road and into the tree.

The unbelted teen suffered facial cuts from the crash, but he managed to walk to a nearby house where the occupants called 911, according to Woodford County Sheriff's Department officials.

The youth told a Washburn police officer who also responded to the crash that he intended to hit the tree, the crash was no accident.

Police found the letters "RIP EK" written on the car's windows and a marker on the front seat. The "EK" referred to is Evan

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