

News Briefs

By The Associated Press

Judge lets woman test dead man's DNA

PITTSBURGH — A woman will be allowed to have tests of a dead man's DNA to determine if he is her father, a Pennsylvania appellate court ruled.

A judge is calling the case the first of its kind in the state. Superior Court last week upheld a Common Pleas Court judge's order for tests of blood and tissue from Gary Greenwood of Waynesburg, who died in August 1989 after striking his head on a bathtub in his home.

Lisa Sowden has told Greenwood's widow, Lois, that she intended to claim part of Greenwood's estate. Greenwood, 42, president of a home heating oil company, drafted no will but did leave an estate worth more than \$750,000, including antique cars.

"We broke up before he knew I was pregnant" with Lisa, who is now 19, said her mother, Susan Sowden of Clarksville, Greene County.

Susan Sowden said she dated Greenwood in high school and he acknowledged he was the father after he learned of her child's birth from a relative. His name appears on the woman's birth certificate.

"He used to come visit Lisa when she was little. Lisa re-established the relationship when she was 17," Susan Sowden said.

Greenwood said she needed blood tests to prove Lisa Sowden was Greenwood's daughter and also wouldn't allow the Greene County coroner to release blood and tissue samples that were stored in Allegheny County after an autopsy.

Greenwood's attorney, James Hook, argued an 18-year statute of limitations for seeking child support also limits the amount of time in which paternity can be established — and therefore would invalidate Lisa Sowden's claim.

Senior Superior Court Judge Harry Montgomery called the case the first of its kind in Pennsylvania, and agreed with two other Superior Court judges that Grimes' ruling was just and proper.

Fight goes on over 'switched' babies

SARASOTA, Fla. (AP) — While Hollywood works to bring the story of babies "Switched at Birth" to the screen, the real-life players are heading to court in a bitter tug of war over a 12-year-old girl.

"The preliminary script we reviewed for the movie had a happy ending and it's our hope that the real-life story will have a happy ending also," said John Blakely, an attorney who is seeking visitation rights for the biological parents of Kimberly, a hazel-eyed sixth-grader.

But Bob Mays, who raised the girl from birth only to discover he was not her biological father, is worried Ernest and Regina Twigg want shared custody of his only child.

"We're still on our roller coaster ride," Mays said.

The stories of two families who unknowingly raised the other's child for more than nine years is being made into a television miniseries to be aired over two nights on NBC, likely in early May, producer Michael O'Hara said.

Kimberly, born at a tiny rural hospital in central Florida, went home with the wrong parents — Mays and his late wife, Barbara, who died of cancer in 1981. The girl born to the Mayses, whom the Twigg named Arlena, died of a heart defect in 1988.

Just before Arlena's death, genetic tests showed she was not the Twigg's biological daughter.

Their search for their biological daughter led them back to Hardee Memorial Hospital in Wauchula, where Mays and Twigg gave birth within days of each other in winter 1978.

The Twigg's quest eventually led to a three-year custody battle over Kimberly. Mays, a Sarasota roofing salesman, rejected repeated requests for genetic testing to resolve the mystery.

The impasse was broken when the Twigg agreed in writing in October 1989 not to seek custody of Kimberly, even if she turned out to be their daughter. Under the agreement, the Twigg had the option to seek visitation.

Genetic tests showed the Twigg were Kimberly's biological parents, and psychologists were brought in to make recommendations if and when meetings should occur. No timetable was set.

Mutant turtles said to cause violence

BOSTON (AP) — Those lean green fighting machines known as Teen-age Mutant Ninja Turtles are bringing violence to the classroom, say teachers from around the country who responded to a survey.

"The Turtles encourage violent and anti-social behavior among young children and have a disturbing effect on learning, behavior and play," said Diane Levin, an associate professor of education at Wheelock College who was co-author of the study.

Some adults may think the four turtles, named for Renaissance painters, are more likely to spark a child's imagination than run-of-the-mill musclebound superheroes.

The study's general conclusion from the 73 educators from 19 states who responded to the survey was that youngsters emulate the turtles' karate chopping and pizza chomping, but little else.

Ninety-five percent of the respondents provided examples of aggressive behavior linked to the turtle characters, Levin said Sunday.

"The way the Ninja turtles work out their difficulties is by socking each other and knocking each other," said survey respondent Hanne Sonquist, a member of the board of the National Association for the Education of Young Children.

"It's totally programmed and scripted so that many children who watch a great deal of that kind of programming have less access to the imagination," said Sonquist, who runs a workshop for parents and young children in California.

Levin, who has written books on children's fascination with war play, conceived the survey after parents and teachers asked her to examine turtle mania. She conducted the study with Nancy Carlsson-Paige, an associate professor of education at Lesley College in Cambridge.

"When the Teen-age Mutant Ninja Turtles came out, we immediately began to get telephone calls from teachers and parents telling us how kids were going crazy," she said.

Cincinnati zoo walrus pregnant again

CINCINNATI (AP) — Aituk the walrus is pregnant again, and her keepers at the Cincinnati Zoo are hoping for some good news this spring.

An ultrasound examination has confirmed that the 3,000-pound, 13-year-old walrus is well into her pregnancy and is carrying a healthy and active fetus, zoo veterinarian Mark Campbell said.

Doug Feist, coordinator of the zoo's education programs, said he thinks Aituk could deliver by the end of May — perhaps much to her relief.

"She's just moving slow and she's big as can be. She's very tight, very round. Her flippers couldn't quite reach the ground," he said after watching the walrus Saturday. "She would roll to the side and sigh."

Aituk and her 4,500-pound partner, Bruiser, are among few pairs of breeding-age walrus in captivity worldwide, Feist said.

The zoo has been unable to coax a live birth from Aituk since she arrived in 1987 from the Sea World park in San Diego. Bruiser, 13, arrived the same year from Sea World at Aurora in northeastern Ohio.

Aituk gave birth to a stillborn pup in 1988. Zoo personnel believe she aborted a pregnancy last year, Feist said.

Feist said it is difficult to ascertain whether a walrus is pregnant, because of its size and because not much is known about the walrus gestation process, since there have been only a few captive births.

Body of possible murder victim exhumed

WASHINGTON, Pa. (AP) — The body of a man whose death allegedly was plotted by his wife and her teen-age lover will be exhumed from a Washington County cemetery and examined for additional clues.

John D. Cassidy, 33, of Monongahela was fatally shot in the throat at his home Feb. 12. His death was listed as a suicide.

Common Pleas Judge David Gilmore signed an exhumation order Friday, which probably will be executed this week, county District Attorney John Pettit said. Cassidy was buried at Round Hill Cemetery in Elizabeth Township.

A coroner's inquest was scheduled for March 26.

"The manner of death is still listed as suicide, although I have no doubt we are dealing with a homicide," county coroner Farrell Jackson said. "The barrel of the shotgun had been stuck right up against his Adam's apple."

Cassidy admitted to police at the time of her arrest Monday that she killed her husband.

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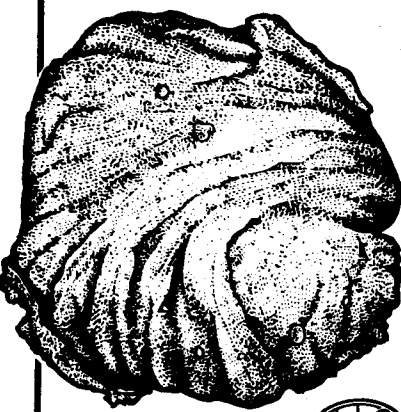
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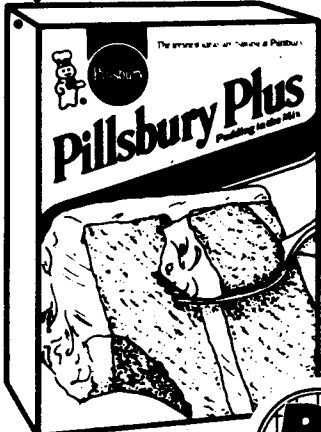
California Iceberg Head Lettuce

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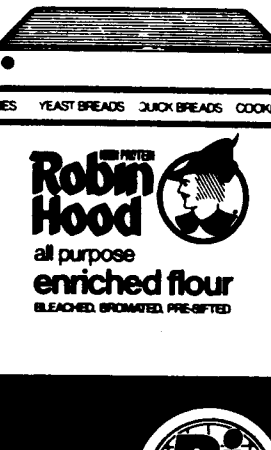
Top Frost Or Round Hill Turkey Breasts 4-7 lb. Sizes

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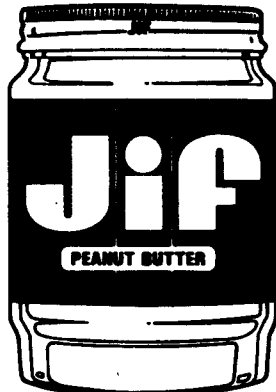
Pillsbury Plus Or Lovin' Lites Layer Cake Mix 18.5 to 20.2 oz. 9 Kinds

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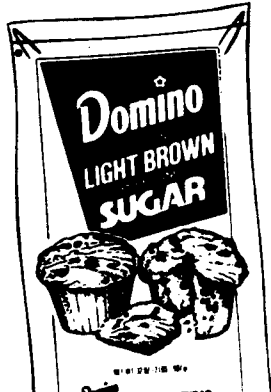
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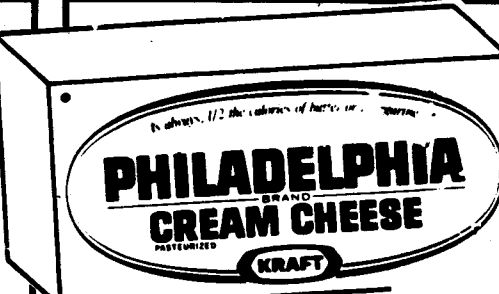
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