

Cyanide suspect sought

United Press International
CHICAGO — Police searched nationwide Tuesday for an Illinois man who is wanted for questioning in the cyanide Tylenol poisoning deaths of seven people. They said "substances" taken from his apartment were being analyzed.

Mort Friedman, a spokesman for Illinois Attorney General Tyrone Fahner, said a bulletin was issued Monday for Kevin Masterson, 35, of Lombard, Ill., believed to be visiting a friend near Murray, Ky., — about 400 miles south of Chicago.

The Chicago Sun-Times quoted Dale Span, a Murray police captain, as saying state task force investigators flew to that area Monday night.

However, a Paducah, Ky., television station reported Masterson left the area during the weekend for an undis-

closed location.

The police bulletin said Masterson has a history of mental illness and may be dangerous. He was described as a white male with red hair and blue eyes, about 5-feet-10 and weighing 165 pounds.

Friedman stressed Masterson is wanted only for questioning at this point, in the deaths of seven people who took capsules of Extra-Strength Tylenol in the Chicago area between Sept. 29 and Oct. 1.

Hundreds of tips and rumors have led investigators to numerous dead ends and the killings set off a rash of copycat poisonings and tamperings nationwide.

Masterson's landlord, 85, was not identified, said the man told him he once admit-

ted himself into a mental hospital to avoid military service in the Vietnam War.

"He always helped me with things, all kinds of things around the apartment," the thiefly man said. "I don't believe he had any connection with anything like that."

Investigators armed with search warrants went through Masterson's room Friday and recovered "various items." Friedman refused to identify any of the items taken from the apartment, saying only they included certain "substances."

The substances were being analyzed, he said. Investigators also conducted interviews of several friends and acquaintances Saturday and Sunday.

The man's father, reached in suburban Wheeling by the Chicago Tribune, said his son

had no chemistry background and was on a trip he had planned to take alone.

"I think it is dastardly that his name was used," the father said. "There is no question in my mind he is not the one who did this."

Another suspect in the case, James W. Lewis, a fugitive wanted on federal extortion charges, is still being sought by investigators. Lewis is accused of demanding \$1 million from Johnson & Johnson, owners of the company which makes Tylenol, to "stop the killings."

In New Jersey, a federal magistrate set a \$50,000 bond for a man charged in a copycat extortion plot. Vernon A. Williams, 34, of Newark, allegedly threatened to distribute cyanide-tainted Tylenol nationwide unless he was paid \$100,000.

Thunderbird widows denied AF evidence

United Press International
LAS VEGAS, Nev. — The widows of three Air Force Thunderbird stunt pilots will not be permitted to use a 700-page military accident report as evidence in their multi-million-dollar suit against the company which manufactured the jets.

U.S. Magistrate Philip Pro on Monday denied use of the Air Force accident report prepared by the Air Force. The report blamed the "follow-the-leader" crash of the Thunderbirds on a jammed tail stabilizer.

Attorney Gary Logan is representing three of the four widows of the pilots killed during a Jan. 18 practice exercise at Indian Springs, Nev. He asked Pro to admit the entire 700-page accident as evidence.

Logan sought to use the accident report evidence in the pending trial against Northrup Inc., manufacturers of the T-38s.

Logan told Pro in oral arguments Oct. 26 that his experts,

based upon the report, would testify that the lead aircraft piloted by Maj. Norman Lowry was defective and it was a design defect that caused the crash.

Lowry, 37, from Radford, Va., died in the crash along with Capt. Willie Mays, 32, from Ripley, Tenn.; Capt. Joseph Peterson, 32, from Tuskegee, Ala.; and Capt. Mark E. Melancon, 31, from Dallas.

Logan represents the widows

and children of Lowry, Peterson and Melancon. They are seeking a total of \$6 million in damages from Northrup. A separate suit against the aircraft builder on behalf of Sara Ann Mays is pending in a California state court.

Attorney Rex Jemison, representing Northrup, said the Thunderbird accident report should not be admitted.

Manson escape plot suspected by guards

United Press International
VACAVILLE, Calif. — Prison officials suspect mass-murderer Charles Manson and three other convicts of plotting an escape by using a hot-air balloon to fly over the walls at the California Medical Facility.

Prison spokesman Don Custard said Monday that Manson and the other inmates were placed in special custody pending an investigation. He said escape charges may be filed.

Custard said guards discovered a hacksaw blade, a piece of metal that appeared to be fashioned into a knife, 100 feet of nylon rope and a catalog for ordering a hot-air balloon. The hacksaw blade was found in Manson's cell along with what officials suspect were marijuana and LSD.

Manson, 48, was the notorious head of the "family" of young dropouts who killed actress Sharon Tate and six others in Southern California in 1969.

Custard said the discovery of the items was made after a guard got suspicious Friday night when he found the door to the prison's Protestant chapel tied shut with an electrical cord. When the guard ordered the door opened, he found Manson and the other inmates.

A search of the chapel's attic resulted in discovery of a piece of metal that could have been "a

prison-fashioned weapon," Custard said.

Custard said guards searched Manson's cell on Saturday and found the hacksaw blade and what they believe to be marijuana and LSD. He said tests are

being performed to determine the contents of the substances.

Custard said guards conducting a later search of the chapel found the nylon cord and the balloon catalog.

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