

Farmhouse fire under investigation

LONSDALE, Minn. (AP) — A man who died in a suspicious farmhouse fire that killed five others struggling with legal and financial problems before the blaze, court records show.

Autopsies were being performed yesterday to determine whether the bodies were those of Primitivo Juan Rivas, 48; his son, Tyler, 16, and daughter, KiAnn, 20; Rivas' girlfriend, Catherine Ranft, 38, and her children, Caroline, 4, and Meredith, age 5 or 6.

Investigators hoped to learn whether they died in the fire early Wednesday, or were killed before it.

Rice County Sheriff Richard Cook said gasoline found at the scene, the position of the bodies in the rubble and the location of charred vehicles near the house were among the signs that the fire was deliberately set.

Rivas was supposed to start serving a 90-day jail sentence Monday for failing to pay child support, according to court records. A warrant for his arrest was issued when he did not appear.

Court records and the husband of Rivas' ex-wife indicated that Rivas, a computer engineer, had been out of work for more than a year and that he was not seeking a job, apparently because he did not want his monogamy going to his former wife.

"He was very vengeful, threatened to take her down financially after the divorce," said Gary Hanneman of Burnsville, whose wife, Debra, was married to Rivas for 21 years. "That's what he told the kids."

As part of the divorce, Rivas was saddled with \$30,000 in unpaid bills, mostly credit card bills.



AP

Rivas owed more than \$10,000 in child support, medical support and spousal maintenance as of March, court records show. As of October, he had not made a mortgage payment for six months.

Seven missing after helicopter crashes at sea



SAN DIEGO (AP) — A Marine Corps helicopter with 18 people aboard crashed in the Pacific yesterday, and seven remained missing hours later.

The CH-46 Sea Knight crashed about 1:16 p.m., 25 miles southwest of San Diego.

Eleven people were quickly pulled from the water, but their conditions were unavailable, Coast Guard Lt. Eric Carter said.

Weather in the area was good with light winds and waves and clear skies.

The helicopter crashed after taking off from the USS Pecos, a Navy oiler that provides fuel to ships at sea.

The helicopter was assigned to the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit at Camp Pendleton, about 36 miles north of San Diego, a Marine spokesman, Sgt. Matthew Hagerman, said.

The Marines use the helicopter as an all-weather assault transport.

Army private sentenced to life for murder

FORT CAMPBELL, Ky. (AP) — An Army private was sentenced yesterday to life in prison with the possibility of parole for bludgeoning to death a fellow soldier who had been rumored to be gay — a case that gay rights activists said was a tragic failure of "don't ask, don't tell."

Pvt. Calvin N. Glover, 18, was convicted in a court-martial a day earlier of premeditated murder. The offense carries a mandatory sentence of life in prison; the only question before the military jury yesterday was whether he should be eligible for parole.

Glover showed no reaction to the

sentence. He will also be demoted and dishonorably discharged.

Glover used a baseball bat to crush the skull of a barracks mate, Pfc. Barry L. Winchell, 21, as he slept in his cot at Fort Campbell.

There had been a swirl of rumors on the base that Winchell was gay, and prosecutors said Glover was driven by hatred of homosexuals.

Glover, who is from Sulphur, Okla., apologized in court earlier yesterday, saying he was drunk at the time of the crime and has since found God.

"If I had acted as half the man, even half the soldier as Barry was,

he'd be with us right now," he said.

Gay rights activist C. Dixon Osburn, co-executive director of the Servicemembers Legal Defense Network in Washington, said the case proves that the Pentagon's "don't ask, don't tell" policy does not work.

"I think this case shatters any illusions that 'don't ask, don't tell, don't pursue' is somehow a benign policy," he said. "This is a policy of violence."

Under "don't ask, don't tell," gay members of the military can continue to serve — and their superiors cannot investigate and expel them — as long as they keep their sexual orientation to themselves.

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