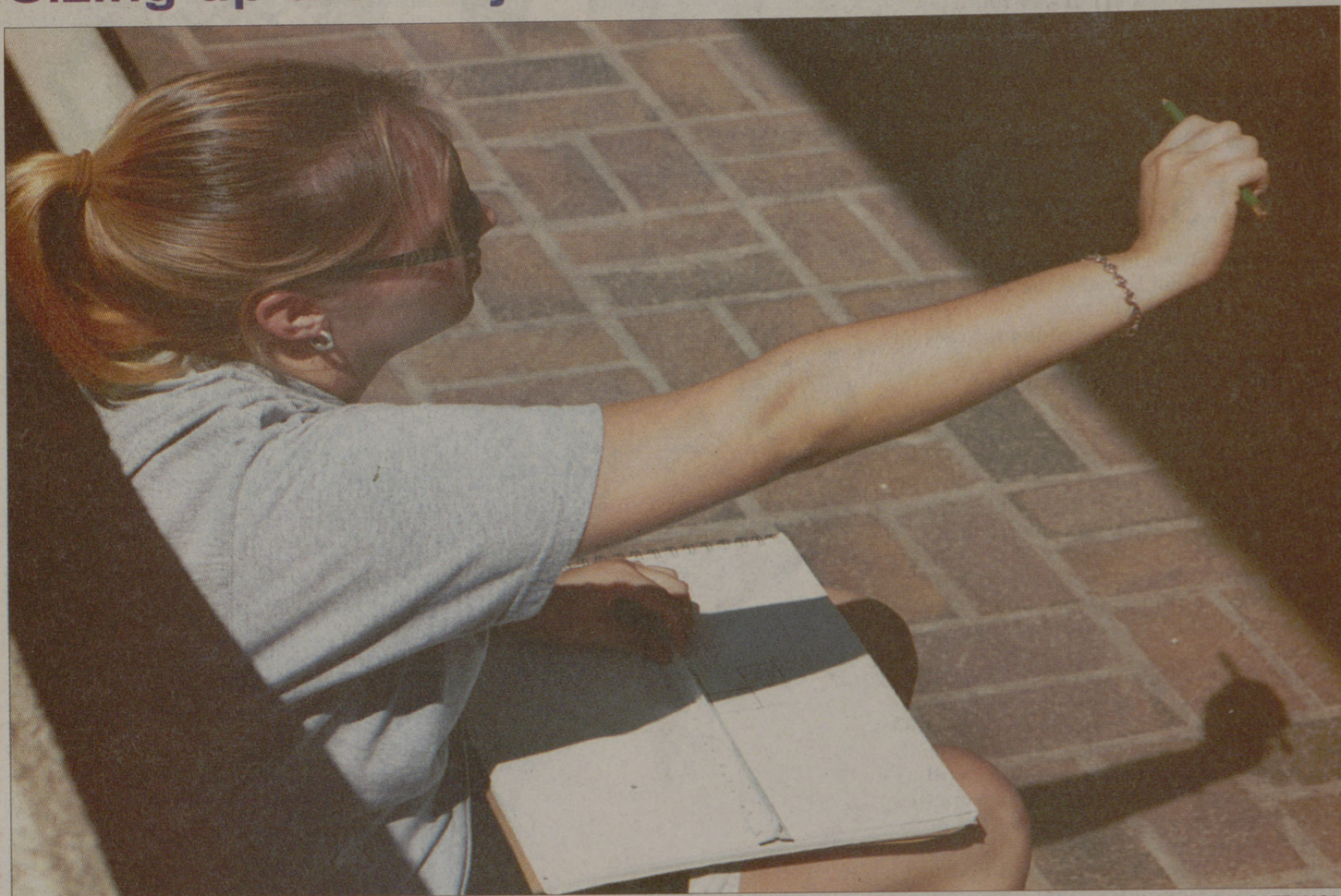


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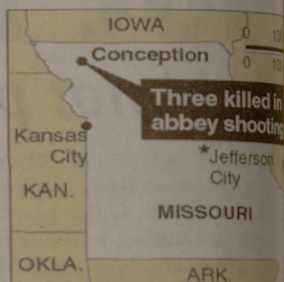


Amanda Radicke, a sophomore general studies major, sketches a one-point perspective drawing of the Memorial Student Center for her Environmental Science 115 class, Monday afternoon.

JOSHUA HOBSON • THE BATTALION

Gunman attacks abbey, killing two

CONCEPTION, Mo. (AP) — A 71-year-old man opened fire at a sprawling Roman Catholic abbey on Monday, killing two monks and wounding two other people before taking his own life, authorities said. The body of the gunman was found in the chapel at the Conception Abbey Benedictine monastery, said a Missouri State Highway Patrol official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. The official said the man shot himself to death after shooting the others. Nodaway County Sheriff Ben Espy said an AK-47 and a sawed-off .22-caliber rifle were found nearby.



SOURCES: Associated Press; Es...

Authorities were seeking a motive, and church officials said they did not know whether the attack may have been linked to the sex abuse scandal that has plagued the Catholic Church in recent months.

The Rev. Gregory Polan, abbot of Conception, said he was shown a driver's license of the shooter and that "we have no sense of who this man is."

The gunman, whose name was not released, was from Kearney, 70 miles south of the abbey. The names of the two monks — a 64-year-old and a man in his 80s — also were not immediately released.

Of the wounded, one was in serious condition at Heartland Regional Medical Center in St. Joseph and the other was in surgery Monday at St. Francis Hospital in Maryville. Their connection to the abbey was not immediately known.

Polan said monks heard noises about 8:40 a.m. and barred themselves in their rooms when they realized a gun was being fired.

"There's a lot of shock and sadness," Polan said. "These

Three killed in abbey shooting

were two monks whose have been lived here in a gous, gracious spirit."

Polan said he was shown driver's license of the shooter and "we have no sense of this man is."

Rebecca Summers, spokeswoman for the Kansas City Joseph archdiocese, said office had no comment on shootings. When asked if could be related to the scandal she said: "We know. We have no idea who person is, whether he real among the deceased. It appears to be no explanation to why this happened."

Ronda Strueby, 39, a supervisor in the packaging department of the Abbey's printing house said all employees were evacuated at about 9 a.m.

"One of the monks, Brother Jeremiah, said there's a man the monastery with a gun, we need everyone to evacuate," she said in a phone interview. "We were all told to go home."

She added, "It's just something you think about opening, especially in a religious institution."

The abbey is a sprawling Benedictine monastery and seminary. The seminary college campus is the largest pre-training center in the Diocese of Kansas City-St. Joseph. The complex also has a basilica.

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Bush casts fresh doubts on hopes for Mideast peace

WASHINGTON (AP) — As Israeli tanks encircled Yasser Arafat's headquarters, President Bush cast fresh doubts Monday on prospects for Mideast peace with the Palestinian leader in power.

"No one has confidence in the emerging Palestinian government," Bush said with Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon at his side.

Sharon, too, suggested there won't be peace until anti-Israeli terrorism ends and Arafat is replaced.

"We must have a partner for negotiations," the prime minister told Bush. "We don't see a partner yet."

The criticism of Arafat from both leaders came as Israel's tanks surrounded Arafat's battered West Bank compound and Israeli troops arrested 27 suspected Palestinian militants — actions the United States defended as a temporary crackdown.

Sharon did not get everything he wanted from Bush during their hour-long session and separate lunch. The president stopped short of endorsing calls to expel Arafat, and aides said he would pursue political talks despite Sharon's misgivings.

The sixth meeting between Bush and Sharon is expected to be the president's final major consultation session before he unveils a Mideast initiative that aides say will address the concerns of both Israelis and Arabs.

Bush met last weekend with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak, who wants Israeli

troops to withdraw from territories occupied since 1967. Sharon has ruled that out, a sign of how difficult Bush's peace act will be.

His new Mideast peace plan expected as early as this month will put a premium on change in the Palestinian Authority, give Israelis hope for security. At the same time, he intends to push for concrete steps toward a Palestinian state as sought by Arab leaders — such as a timetable for negotiations, aides said.

Bush pointed to Arafat's government when he said conditions are not ripe for an international conference on Mideast peace that planned for summer.

"That's because no one has confidence in the emerging Palestinian government," he said.

after the Oval Office session with Sharon. Bush did not mention Arafat's nods at the time, such as naming a new, smaller Cabinet.

The Mideast conference still on track for this summer, though it may be later than previously thought, aides said.

"First things first, and then what institutions are needed to give the Palestinian people hope and to give the emerging confidence that the emerging government will be someone with whom they can deal," Bush said.

"That's going to be a security steps, transparency when it comes to economic reform, anti-corruption and the rule of law enforced by a system."

"We must have a partner for negotiations. We don't see a partner yet."

— George W. Bush
U.S. President

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