

METRO + STATE

'I thought I was fixing to die'

Man accused of killing cousin testifies in court at Fargo murder trial

By Emily Welker
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Fargo

Christopher Hampton couldn't say how the methamphetamines got in his system or how many times a day he pestered doctors last summer to test him and the Gatorade bottle he believed his cousin slipped poison into.

But testifying in his murder trial Monday, Hampton was adamant on one issue: His cousin he fatally shot in the back and the back of the head, Randall Doehner, was coming at him with a gun and would have killed him if Hampton hadn't first.

After taking the stand in Cass County District Court on Monday morning, Hampton told jurors that Doehner, who was also his roommate, surprised him suddenly in the kitchen of their home the night of June 26, 2014, by coming upon him and putting his hands around his throat as the two began to argue over housing.

He pushed Doehner away, he told jurors, and when Doehner returned, he had a gun.

"I thought I was fixing to die ... I thought my life was over ... 'cause when he raised it up he cocked the hammer," Hampton said.

Hampton said Doehner fumbled the weapon and dropped it, and after a short struggle, he shoved the other man and grabbed the gun away. He claims he opened fire when Doehner ignored his commands to stop.

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Michael Vosburg / Forum Photo Editor

During his murder trial in district court Monday, Christopher Hampton describes fending off his cousin and roommate before shooting him.

Fargo Dome board president says he will recommend beer garden at Bison games

By Grace Lyden
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FARGO – Joining city commissioners in the "beer for all" camp, the president of the Fargo Dome Authority board will recommend approving alcohol sales for the general public at Bison games, possibly through a beer garden.

"It doesn't seem to me that it's fair to the general public to have alcohol available in the suites but not for the general population of people who attend games," John Q. Paulsen said Monday.

He's not sure where the alcohol would be sold, and because that takes time to figure out, he envisions sales starting in the suites this fall

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JOHN Q. PAULSEN, president of the Fargo Dome Authority board



Forum file photo

Bison fans celebrate a touchdown during a game against Sam Houston State on Dec. 19, 2014, in the Fargodome.

and for the general public mid-season. Last week, Paulsen met with North Dakota State University President Dean Bresciani, who reiterated he was

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Health officials investigate E. coli outbreak in ND

Officials looking into possible Red River Valley Fair connection

By Emily Welker
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BISMARCK – Three children sickened in a recent E. coli outbreak in eastern North Dakota reported attending the Red River Valley Fair earlier this month, prompting state health officials to investigate whether animals there were the source of the infection.

Officials said Monday it's still early in the investigation, but they're asking anyone who attended the fair, which ran from July 7 to 13, and developed diarrhea or bloody diarrhea for more than 24 hours within 10 days of the fair, to contact them.

The shiga toxin-producing infection from Escherichia coli, or STEC infection, can cause nausea, cramping, diarrhea, vomiting and bloody diarrhea, symptoms that can be severe enough to require hospitalization.

One of the children has developed a complication from the infection which can affect red blood cells and cause kidney damage and kidney failure, said Michelle Feist, a state epidemiologist with the Division of Disease Control.

"Although the cases reported having contact with animals at the fair, we are looking into other possible exposures as well," said Feist.

E. coli is shed in the fecal matter of infected animals and people. Undercooked meats, contaminated sprouts and petting zoos have all been implicated in past E. coli outbreaks in the U.S.

Red River Valley Fair General Manager Bryan Schulz expressed shock at the announcement, saying he'd heard no details from health officials other than a call early Monday inquiring from where the fair's animals had come.

"We haven't had a petting zoo for three years," Schulz said. "I'm not sure where they're getting this from."

Schulz said while fair officials have been moving away from having petting zoos precisely because of concerns over E. coli, people at the fair could have reached through cage bars in the rabbit display area or petted baby pigs held by workers in the Ag Education Center.

All animals in the Ag Education Center came from North Dakota State University, he said, while other animals on display came there from private owners.

The fair has a protocol of spraying down its barns after any horse or cattle shows and does not allow food vendors near the animal areas, Schulz said.

"I don't know where these individuals could have gotten it," said Schulz.

For more information or to report an E. coli case, call the North Dakota Department of Health at (800) 472-2180.

Readers can reach Forum reporter Emily Welker at (701) 241-5541

New free downtown bus proved popular during Fargo street fair

By Grace Lyden
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FARGO — Almost 2,000 people rode the downtown circulator bus during the Downtown Fargo Street Fair last week, more riders than the new service had ever seen.

The two LinkFM buses gave an average of 32 rides per hour per bus to 1,974 riders, compared to three rides per hour and 80 riders the previous Thursday through Saturday.

"It really worked well, and we had a lot of positive comments," said Fargo Commissioner Mike Williams, who pushed for the free route between Moorhead Center Mall and downtown Fargo.

But the Fargo and Moorhead transit admin-



Michael Vosburg / Forum Photo Editor

Sandra Smith drives a loop bus Monday from Moorhead to downtown Fargo.

istrators said it wasn't just fried food and lack of parking that brought residents to the bus stops last week. They attribute the jump in riders also to a kickoff event Wednesday, where they unveiled the service's name, logo and website.

"We wanted to just really hit it hard before

Street Fair, so people were aware of being able to use that," Fargo transit administrator Julie Bommelman said. "And we're hoping that awareness is going to get people to jump onboard on a regular basis."

"It won't stay at (600 to 700) a day, but it will, I think, contin-

ue to build," Williams said, adding that it takes nine months to a year to develop a route.

The circulator bus, which launched June 1, had just 877 riders in June and 247 riders from July 1 to July 15, Bommelman said. But now there are signs at the bus stops, a banner near the MATBUS center and a colorful wrap on the bus itself.

"You can't miss it," she said.

Bommelman said the city budgeted \$12,000 to market the service through December, about half of which went toward the wrap.

"We wanted it to be different from any bus that's out there, and it is," Williams said.

Readers can reach Forum reporter Grace Lyden at (701) 241-5502