

KSU wins MAC title with 71-66 victory over Toledo

NCAA BOUND!

Who will KSU play? Selection show today at 6 p.m. ■ KSU women lose in MAC final. **SPORTS, C1**



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Sunday

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Professors from two colleges, the Akron City Council president and a jury were on Charles Plinton's side . . . but it wasn't enough



DEGREES OF JUSTICE

Story by John Higgins
Beacon Journal staff writer

Photos by Ed Suba Jr.
Beacon Journal photographer

TODAY: The story of what happened to Charles Plinton in Akron.

MONDAY: Answers to questions the Plinton story raises.

Darkness already was falling when Charles Plinton called his mother from his car on the Pennsylvania Turnpike. It was a mid-December afternoon, just a few months ago.

She was pulling into her driveway but stayed in her car, and they talked as they did every day, mother to son.

Frances Parker Robinson could tell her son was dejected. It was the usual: bills, money, his broken life.

It had been more than a year since he'd been suspended from the graduate program at the University of Akron.

Professors from two universities and even the Akron City Council president believed he was treated unjustly here, especially after a jury cleared him. But their efforts on his behalf failed, and he returned home to New Jersey humiliated.

Talk to your father, she suggested. "No, no, I'm 25 years old. I should be able to take care of myself. I don't want to keep asking people for a handout and for help. I'm a grown man."

She said he could move back in with her.

"You know, Carl has his master's already," he said. "I should have had my master's degree."

She told him what happened in Akron wasn't his fault.

"Listen Chuck, we believe in God and prayer. Go down on your knees and pray."

"I just got off my knees from praying and talking to God. I asked God to forgive me."

"Forgive you for what?"
"Mom, I don't even have money in the bank to pay my car payment or my share of the rent. I bought a gun. I'm going to end it."

A future with promise

His parents had been so proud of him that bright May day in 2003 when he received his undergraduate degree from Lincoln University.

The small campus about 45 miles southwest of Philadelphia is the nation's oldest historically black college.

Please see **A12**

A graduation photo of Charles Plinton stands against the wall in his mother's apartment in Plainfield, N.J. Frances Parker Robinson, seen reflected in the mirrored entertainment center, speaks of her son's ordeal during a February interview.

Ohio.com

With this story on Ohio.com, listen to audio of Plinton's mother, a Lincoln University professor and others on what happened.

Uncle jailed in baby killing

Stark man charged in rape, murder of 7½-month-old; suspect on suicide watch

By **Kymberli Hagelberg**
Beacon Journal staff writer

A Stark County man was jailed Saturday on charges that he raped and murdered his 7½-month-old niece.

Henry Anthony Sunderman, 32, of Tuscarawas Avenue West in Canton, was on suicide watch at the Stark County Jail. He was being held in lieu of \$2.5 million bond in the death of Zoey Sunderman.

According to Waynesburg police, Henry Sunderman called 911 about 9 a.m. Friday. Paramedics found the child unresponsive. She first was taken to Aultman Hospital, then to the intensive care unit of Akron Children's Hospital, where she died at 2:02 p.m.

Waynesburg Police Sgt. Rachel Volkar said Sunderman was arrested Friday after a short interview at his Canton home.



Henry Sunderman

Please see **Baby, A10**

12-year-old in Uganda scrapes by

Ex-soldier one of many abducted by army, now struggling to live

By **Shashank Bengali**
Knight Ridder Newspapers

GULU, UGANDA: Dennis Ojok's childhood ended three years ago, when he was 9. He was kidnapped from his grandmother's garden and forced to become a soldier in a rebel army that had a bizarre and brutal taste for children.

He survived two harrowing years in the bush before he escaped, only to discover that his grandmother — the only family he knew — had died. The child soldier became a child of the streets, waking before dawn and spending his days searching for menial jobs.

If Dennis manages to earn the equivalent of 15 cents in a day, he'll eat. If he doesn't, he goes hungry.

Not yet a teenager, this little boy, whose soulful eyes and big white smile mask a steely determination, is trying to make a life entirely on his own.

Please see **Uganda, A14**

Public, KSU to see brackets

The public is invited to Kent State at 5 this afternoon as the men's basketball team watches the NCAA Tournament selection show on TV at 6 at the student union (Rathskellar, in the lower level).

The Golden Flashes earned their first berth to the NCAA Tournament since 2002 with Saturday night's 71-66 win over Toledo in the championship game of the Mid-American Conference Tournament.

Today's weather

Showers and a thunderstorm **67°** High
54° Low

NewsChannel 5 forecast, Page B10

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INSIDE

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- Columnist asks what shoppers do if mistake is in their favor. **D1**
- Rock hall to induct class including Sex Pistols, Black Sabbath. **E1**

Find out what other Americans — including famous ones — earn and what the hottest jobs are. It's all in the annual salary roundup in today's Parade.



"I think where the disconnect lies is the ability to connect the entrepreneurs with the resources available in the community."

JILL HENNESSEY, senior vice president and area manager, National City Bank



We have to work with our citizens and entities in the region. In other words, home-grow what we've got. **ROB BRIGGS**, executive director, GAR Foundation

Leaders suggest how to aid businesses

Our universities teach it. Our chambers of commerce offer it. Yet Akron-area entrepreneurs and small-business owners have a growing need for education and guidance, some local leaders say.

On March 3, a group of business, political and community leaders pledged to address the issue in a discussion the Beacon Journal convened.

Their suggestions:
■ The area needs a Web site and perhaps a physical center dedicated to focusing entrepreneurial thinking and support for small businesses.

■ The site and/or physical center should tap into local expertise at area universities and nonprofit groups.
■ The site, with a reach throughout Northeast Ohio, should be coordinated with the Greater Akron and Canton Regional chambers of commerce.

■ The GAR Foundation will take steps to organize a brainstorming session this summer to consider how to create this "virtual center for entrepreneurial excellence."

For excerpts of this discussion, see **Business, Page D1.**