

Polk

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Inquest ordered in Polk death

By FRAN FRY JR.

A coroner's inquest has been ordered into the Oct. 16 death of a resident of Polk State School and Hospital.

Coroner Jonathan Hutchinson today revealed he was instructed by District Attorney Miles Lynn to schedule an inquest into the death of Raymond Paul Helman, 32, who was strangled by a restraint strap.

Helman was a resident of Cottage One at the time of his death. This is an area which was used for residents with behavioral problems.

The coroner said that he ruled death was caused by asphyxiation, due to strangulation. This was determined by an autopsy, but he never ruled if the death was homicide, suicide or accidental.

Hutchinson said he has to confer with the district attorney in the case, but that the inquest would probably be held sometime in September.

Hutchinson revealed there has been additional evaluation of a suspect in the case and they now feel he is able to at least cooperate with legal counsel if it is necessary to conduct a trial.

It was reported the suspect was examined recently by a Pittsburgh psychiatrist and he ruled he would not be able to stand trial. A source today revealed that the suspect was sent to Warren State Hospital and his condition was reevaluated.

The suspect was a resident of the same cottage where Helman was found dead. He reportedly admitted killing Helman, but the state police have not filed charges against him because they did not feel he was capable of standing trial.