

Suspect wasn't believed to pose a threat

From "DEATHS," page 1

not believe he posed a threat to anyone. Reitcheck had no known criminal history and it is not known why he had a concealed weapon with him.

While Johnson was talking with Reitcheck, Undersheriff Brian Fenner and at least one other deputy was in the room. Smith said after Reitcheck agreed to get mental help, Fenner left the room to make arrangements to take Reitcheck to the hospital and the shooting began.

The deputy, who Smith refused to name, saying he's part of the ongoing investigation, shot and killed Reitcheck. The deputy has been placed on administrative leave.

Smith said Johnson was not wearing a bullet proof vest. Smith said many officers in small towns do not see the gear as necessary.

"Forty-eight percent of sheriffs' offices in Kansas have five or fewer officers," he said. "Sometimes we get a little casual and not wearing a vest is not uncommon."

Smith said members of Johnson's

staff Thursday were given access to psychologists from the Kansas Highway Patrol. Despite law enforcement officers are a "close knit group," high profile cases like a homicide must be dealt with on an individual basis.

"There was a peer support group available Thursday night in an effort to minimize damage done in incidents like this," he said. "These are people you work with, attend meetings with and even play golf with or occasionally have a beer with, but this is all part of the job."

Autopsies on both Johnson and Reitcheck began Friday in Hays, and preliminary reports could be available within a few days.

It could be several weeks to get toxicology reports, which may determine whether Reitcheck was under the influence of alcohol or drugs.

Smith said once the bureau completes its investigation, reports will be given to Sheridan County Attorney Mike Haas, who is expected to make a final statement about the shooting.

Sheriff's services set for Tuesday in Sheridan County

James "Jimmy" Leroy Johnson, 54, of Hoxie, died Thursday, Oct. 26, 2006.

He was born June 14, 1952, in Quinter, to Millard Leroy and Bertha Moss Johnson. James was the Sheriff of Sheridan County.

Sheriff Johnson was preceded in death by his parents Millard and

Bertha Johnson and two granddaughters.

Survivors include his wife, Linda of Hoxie; two sons: James Uhls of Austin, Texas, and Eric Bellamaganya of Kansas City, Mo.; four daughters: Stephanie Hartman of Branson, Mo., Angela Dobbs of Fort Hood, Texas, Amy Irwin of

Rockman, Ga., and Michelle Johnson of Overland Park; and four grandchildren.

Funeral services will be held at 2 p.m., Tuesday at the Hoxie High School auditorium with Pastor Derek Slack officiating.

Burial will follow in the Hoxie Cemetery.

Visitation is today until 8 p.m. at the Mickey-Leopold Funeral Home, 1024 Sheridan Ave., Hoxie.

Memorials may be given in his memory to his grandchildren's education fund. Donations may be left at the First State Bank of Hoxie or at the Mickey-Leopold Funeral Home.



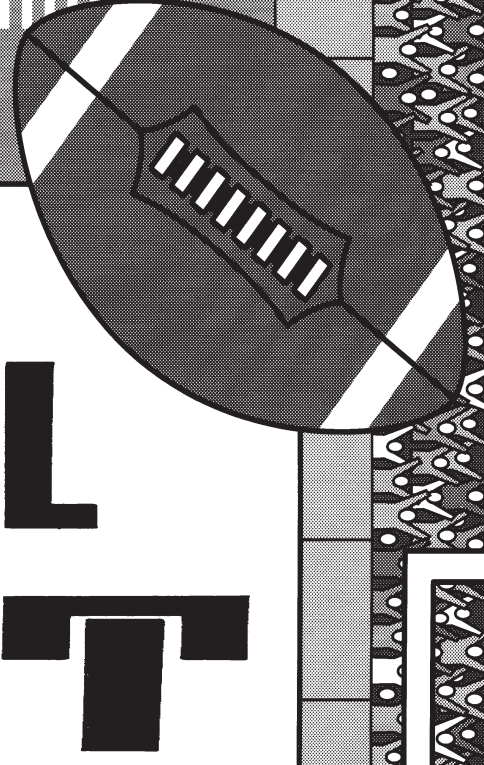
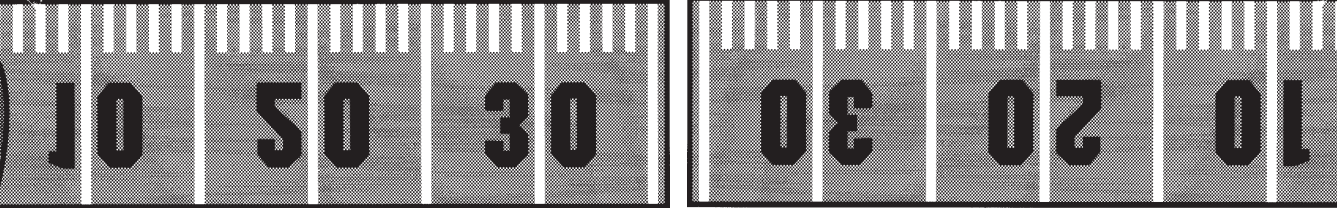
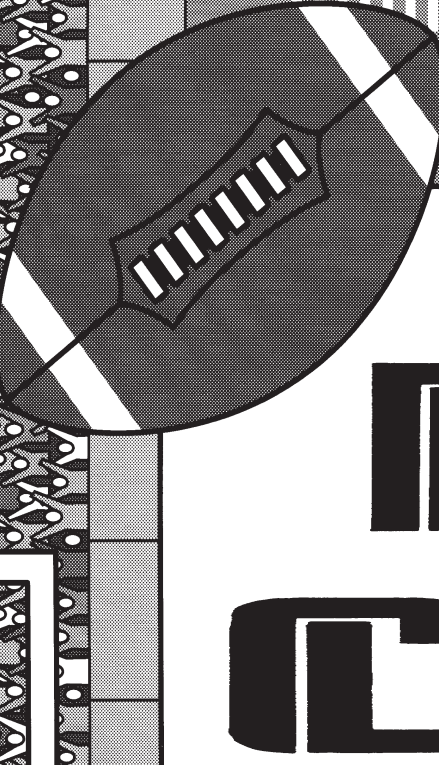
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