



News in brief

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CREVE COEUR - The U.S. Justice Department is investigating a woman's claims that one Creve Coeur police officer tried to rape her and another ran her over in a squad car, an agency official said.

Justice Department spokesman Myron Marlin in Washington said Monday that the agency's Civil Rights Division is probing allegations by Nicole Baldwin in a federal lawsuit that she was attacked New Year's Day 1992.

"I have no problem with them coming in," Police Chief Frank Thatcher said Monday. "Let's just get it to the end."

But he was upset with the implication of the probe.

"This is ruining (the accused officers') reputation ... regardless of the outcome," Thatcher said. "This stays with them for life."

Illinois State Police investigated the same allegations earlier this year, and Tazewell County State's Attorney Erik Blanc declined to file any charges against the officers, citing a lack of evidence.

The officers deny any wrongdoing. They say Baldwin was drunk when they

picked her up and dropped her off at a neighbor's home.

Blanc said Baldwin initially accused her husband, Curtis Baldwin, 35, and a friend of beating and abusing her. She later claimed she fell off a garage and broke her leg.

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