

THURSDAY

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Grand jury to study murder, fire deaths

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A McLennan County grand jury today is scheduled to consider cases against four people charged with capital murder and begin an investigation into the August fire deaths of two Hewitt children.

First Assistant McLennan County District Attorney Deanna Fitzgerald said cases against capital murder defendants Clinnie T. Childress, 24, of 941 Duty Ave., Ricky Kevin Smith, 21, of 2705 S. 14th St., Billy Ray Blake, 22, of 2015 Sanger Ave. and Alvin Roy Collins, 29, of 1908 S. 21st St., will be presented to the grand jury today.

Childress and Smith are charged in the November death of 10-year-old Cheryl Denise Logan.

Blake and Collins are charged in the November death of a Waco man who

was shot in the head in the bedroom of his home.

Ms. Fitzgerald said 15 to 20 witnesses will testify to the grand jury about the Aug. 26 fire deaths of Joby Graf, 9, and Jason Graf, 8, both of Hewitt. She said only four or five witnesses are expected to testify Thursday, and the investigation will have to be continued.

The Graf boys were found inside a fire-gutted shed behind their home at 505 Angel Fire Drive.

Although soot was found in both boys' lungs, indicating they were alive when the fire started, authorities apparently have found no evidence the boys tried to escape from the shed.

Ms. Fitzgerald said the district attorney's office does have a suspect in the boys' death.

"We're going to start presenting the

case on the Hewitt fire, but there is no way we'll finish tomorrow. There are just too many witnesses," Ms. Fitzgerald said.

Childress was arrested by Waco police officers Dec. 8 at his father's Florida home, Smith was arrested Dec. 8 after his mother led detectives to his residence. They found him under a bed, said Waco police spokesman Ira Royals.

The body of Miss Logan, a Kendrick Elementary School fifth-grader, was found Nov. 7 in a field less than eight blocks from her home at 933 Duty Ave. An autopsy revealed she had been strangled and sexually assaulted.

Miss Logan disappeared from her school Nov. 3. She told her teacher she was ill and asked permission to go to the restroom.

Ms. Fitzgerald said Wednesday there

was "always a possibility" of a no-bill in the Logan case.

She said the investigation into Miss Logan's death is continuing and there may be an additional arrest.

Blake and Collins were charged with capital murder after William Jones, 25, of 3705 Colcord Ave. died Nov. 6 at Hillcrest Baptist Medical Center. He had been shot once behind the right ear on Nov. 1.

Jones and his 21-year-old wife, Sharon, were shot while in bed. Police said an intruder kicked in the front door and went into the couple's bedroom.

He made them lie face-down and asked them for money and food stamps before shooting the couple, police said.

Mrs. Jones was injured when she was shot once behind the left ear.