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The Palm Beach Post

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PART OF THE USA TODAY NETWORK

Defense: Williams didn't kill teen

Lawyer alleges suspect only found boy's body

Hannah Phillips

Palm Beach Post
 USA TODAY NETWORK

WEST PALM BEACH — Attorneys for Semmie Lee Williams say he didn't stab 14-year-old Ryan Rogers to death; he stumbled upon his body after the deed was already done.

Assistant Public Defender Stephanie Gagerie's opening statement offered the first glimpse into Williams' defense, which, until days ago, was "not guilty by reason of insanity." Arguing now that he isn't guilty, period, Gagerie said Wil-

liams stumbled upon Ryan while fleeing from a band of stalkers and quickly moved on, not grasping either the boy's age or that he was bleeding.

"What happened to Ryan Rogers is undoubtedly a tragedy. No one in this courtroom will disagree with that," Gagerie said, concluding her statement after just six minutes.

"But Mr. Williams is not responsible for that tragedy."

Prosecutors, during an opening statement three times as long, listed the evidence they say will prove the opposite was true: Williams' DNA beneath Ryan's fingernails, Ryan's blood on a bandana stashed among Williams' belongings. Ryan was "attacked, stabbed and left to die in the woods in the dark,"

said Assistant State Attorney Ricky Clausi.

"The man responsible for that crime — the man with Ryan's metaphorical blood on his hands and, as we will see through the facts and the evidence, Ryan's actual blood in his belongings — is that man right there," he said, pointing at Williams.

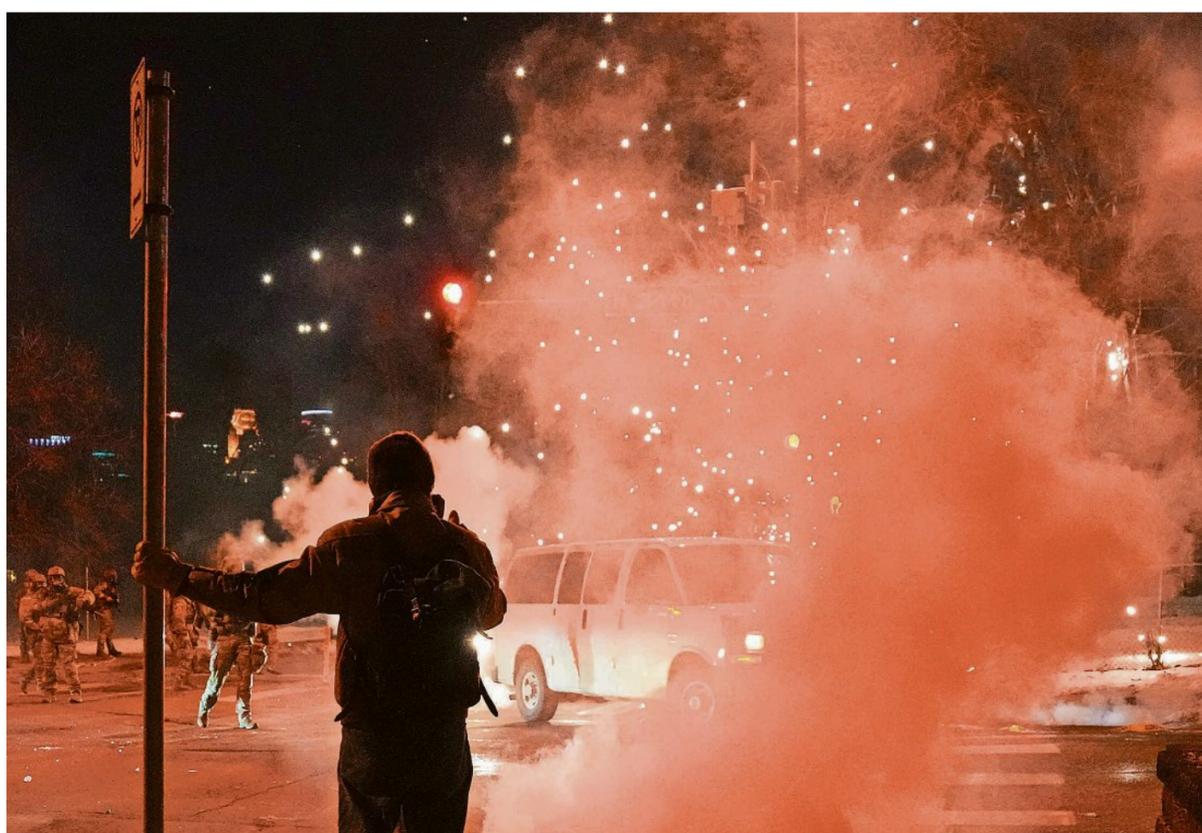
Williams, 43, kept his eyes fixed on his legal pad for the duration of the lawyers statements. These statements marked the official start of a long-awaited trial over the death of Ryan, a William T. Dwyer High School freshman who left his home for a bike ride on Nov. 15, 2021, and never returned.

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Semmie Lee Williams, left, talks with Assistant Public Defender Stephanie Gagerie during jury selection in Judge Cymonie Rowe's courtroom at the Judge Daniel T.K. Hurley Courthouse in downtown West Palm Beach on Jan. 9.

THOMAS CORDY/PALM BEACH POST



A person stands near tear gas smoke Jan. 14 in Minneapolis as tensions rise after federal immigration enforcement agents were involved in a second shooting in seven days. LEAH MILLIS/REUTERS

Trump threatens use of Insurrection Act in MN

Second ICE shooting in 7 days raises tensions

Christopher Cann, Thao Nguyen and Jeanine Santucci

USA TODAY

President Donald Trump on Jan. 15 threatened to invoke the Insurrection Act, which would give him power to deploy armed forces domestically, as tensions ratcheted up yet further in Minnesota following a second shooting involving a federal agent.

The agent shot a person in the leg in Minneapolis on Jan. 14 after allegedly being assaulted during an arrest, the Department of Homeland Security said.

"If the corrupt politicians of Minnesota don't obey the law and stop the pro-

fessional agitators and insurrectionists from attacking the Patriots of I.C.E., who are only trying to do their job, I will institute the INSURRECTION ACT," Trump wrote in a Truth Social post.

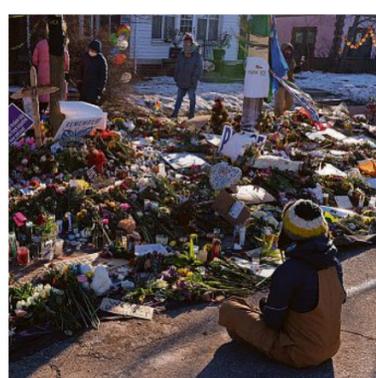
Homeland Security Secretary Kristi Noem said that she has discussed the use of the Insurrection Act with Trump.

"He certainly has the constitutional authority to utilize that," she told reporters. "My hope is that this leadership team in Minnesota will start to work with us to get criminals off the streets."

Noem defended the actions of agents in Minnesota.

"Every single action that our ICE officers take is according to the law and following protocols that we have used for years," she said, adding that there are

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A mourner looks on as flowers and other offerings cover the ground Jan. 14 at a makeshift memorial in Minneapolis for Renee Nicole Good, days after an ICE agent fatally shot her. TIM EVANS/REUTERS

Panhandle snow? 40% chance with winter blast

Kimberly Miller

USA TODAY NETWORK - FLORIDA

Chances for a rare snowfall in the northern reaches of the Sunshine State increased this week as a second frigid cold front is predicted to slam into Florida late Saturday.

Meteorologists with the National Weather Service upped the possibility for snow in the Panhandle to 40% for Jan. 17 into Jan. 18 but cautioned that they are wrestling with a complex forecast that could produce accumulating flurries or no frozen precipitation at all.

Still, the change in how models were treating the increasing potential for snow throughout the week was

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Trump meets with Machado, likes what he sees in regime

Valentina Palm and Antonio Fins

Palm Beach Post
 USA TODAY NETWORK

President Donald Trump is expected to return to Palm Beach on Jan. 16, a day after he met with Venezuelan opposition leader Maria Corina Machado at the White House in a gathering closely monitored across South Florida.

The Jan. 15 meeting, their first meeting following the U.S. military mission this month to depose and capture Venezuelan president Nicolás Maduro, comes as the Trump administration has mulled military action in Iran while pursuing control of Greenland. It also took place hours after U.S.

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