

'Multiple stab wounds' cause of farmer's death  
By Rick Alm – Copley News Service

The DuPage County Coroner has fixed “multiple stab wounds” as the cause of the death of Raymond Nagel, 66, whose body was recovered early Wednesday morning from a four foot deep grave on his rural Wheaton farm. DuPage County sheriff's police have charged Joseph P. Bruns, 28, of West Chicago with Nagel's murder. He is being held in the county jail without bond. A series of complex occurrences surrounding Nagel's death were pieced together by sheriff's police during the past 36 hours. According to Undersheriff Richard Doria, Bruns confessed to detectives Wednesday morning that he killed Nagel and buried him in a marsh on the farm. Bruns, Doria said, drew a map of the farm and grave site for detectives who recovered the body at about 3:30 am Wednesday. The assailant apparently answered Nagel's telephone sometime early Tuesday afternoon. The neighbor who telephoned was told that Nagel had left for Florida, according to Nagel's brother-in-law Charles C. Tansley of Wheaton. Suspicious that Nagel would not leave unexpectedly on a trip; the neighbor called Tansley. In the meantime, Nagel had missed a luncheon date with his fiancée, Alice Patrick, 63, of Warrenville. The pair had planned to be married Saturday in St. Michael's Catholic Church in Wheaton. Nagel was a lifelong bachelor and Mrs. Patrick is a widow. According to family members, the couple met last winter. Tansley told Copley News Service that he drove to the farm where he found Bruns driving a tractor in the field adjacent to the farm on Schmale Road North of North Avenue. Tansley said he confronted Bruns and asked where Nagel was. According to Tansley's account, Bruns said he was, “John A. Brockington”, and in Nagel's employ. Sheriff's police said that the house had been ransacked. Tansley, suspicious of “Brockington” when Nagel could not be located, called the county sheriff's office to report Nagel missing. Tansley said that Bruns accompanied him to the house to call the sheriff. Patrolman Leonard Reynolds took Bruns into custody at the farm sometime Tuesday evening after checking Bruns' story that he was employed by a local ditch digging firm. Bruns was originally charged with criminal trespass, but upon quizzing by a team of detectives, he admitted to the killing and was charged with the murder, Doria said. Doria said a .38 caliber pistol and a five inch knife were discovered under the seat of Bruns' pickup truck Wednesday morning. The gun had not been fired, according to Doria, but Nagel had reportedly been pistol-whipped before he was stabbed to death. According to police, Nagel was killed in the kitchen of his home – possibly during an argument with his killer – and then taken across Schmale Road and buried about one-half mile from the house. Nagel, a slight man of 5'7”, was a self-employed farmer harvesting corn. Tansley described Bruns as “husky” and about six-feet tall. Sheriff's police have not determined a motive for the killing, but have speculated from Bruns' statement that Bruns may have sought to gain control of the farm by force or deception. A hearing has been set for Sept. 11.

Daily Courier-News, Elgin, Ill. Thursday, September 4, 1975