

▷ Continued from Page 1A

Rieffer moved out of the house in May, about the same time Arthur Rieffer filed for divorce.

Winnebago County court records show the divorce never was finalized.

Then, Kimberly Rieffer returned home a few weeks ago.

"They had patched things up," Meyers said.

But Engelkes and Kimberly Rieffer had been dating before she returned to the family home. After Arthur Rieffer went to work Thursday morning, Engelkes showed up at the house. Kimberly Rieffer was inside with her two daughters — ages 10 and 3 — and an unidentified family friend.

Police said the family friend stepped out of the house momentarily between 7:30 and 8 a.m. when the shooting began.

Meyers said the 10-year-old girl saw that her mother had been shot, so she grabbed her younger sister and ran to a neighbor's house. The sheriff said that might have avoided more bloodshed.

"Thank God she did that," he said.

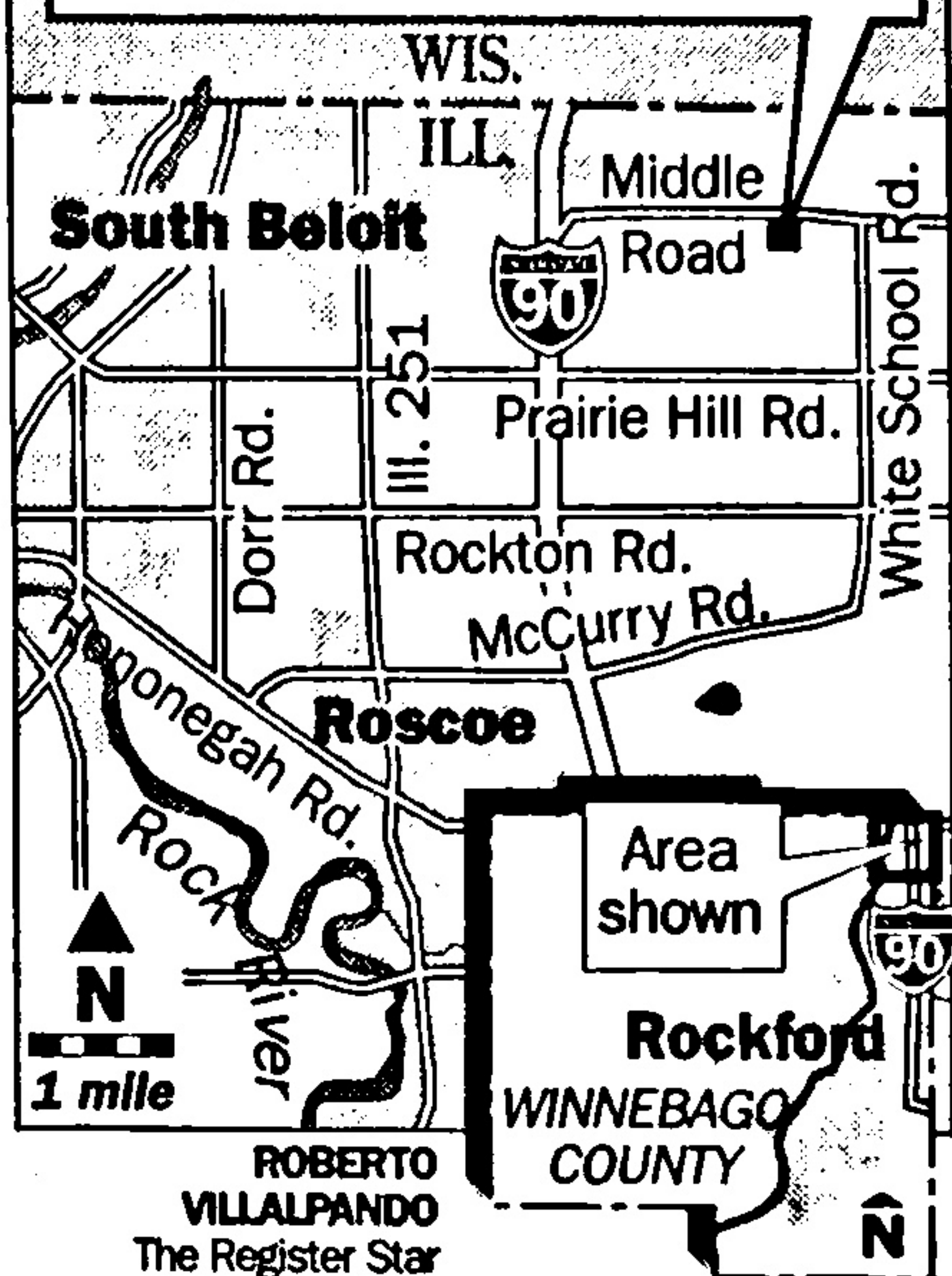
Moments later, Engelkes turned the gun on himself.

As police investigators scoured the scene hours later, a distraught Arthur Rieffer was comforted by several friends and family members outside the house.

Winnebago County State's Attorney Paul Logli said the incident shows that domestic violence is increasingly prevalent and voiced concern about the trauma experienced by the Rieffers' two daughters, who might have witnessed their mother's murder.

7751 Middle Road

Two people died Thursday in the region's latest incident of deadly domestic violence.



"We've got all kinds of victims here today," he said.

Winnebago County Coroner Sue Fiduccia said Engelkes was married, but other information about him was not available.

Neighbors on Middle Road said they were reluctant to intervene in the problems of Arthur and Kimberly Rieffer.

Dorothy Tuttle, 71, said she felt close to the young couple across the street. She recalled how Arthur Rieffer offered comfort and help last summer when Tuttle's husband died.

But when Tuttle noticed that the Rieffers were having difficulties, she was afraid to appear meddlesome.

"They tend to their business, and I tend to mine," she said. "I'd say 'hi' and that's it."