

A deer in the cemetery 'was just out of place'

A deer — a full grown doe — wandered out of the protection of her own habitat one day recently and, somehow, made her way into Acacia Park Cemetery.

The cemetery is green and wooded and the deer might have thought it a safe place to roam. Maybe she was afraid of the traffic roaring up and down five-laned Southfield Road, which borders the cemetery, or of the traffic congestion at the intersection of 13 Mile and Southfield.

But the manager of Acacia was afraid for the creature and called John Murphy, the animal control officer for Southfield Township. Public safety officers in Beverly Hills next door also heard the dispatch call and Sgt. John Knotts and Officer Art Smith went to see if they could help.

MURPHY headed for the nearby cemetery in his animal control van. "As I drove over," he later told me. "I really didn't know what I was going to do with it when I got there. I knew what we really needed was a tranquilizer gun."

"We didn't have one and we weren't able to locate the rifle-kind that we needed from communities in the area. We finally located one at the Detroit Zoo." Someone from Beverly Hills went to get it.

When Murphy and the two Beverly Hills officers

Alice Collins

got to the cemetery they found the doe bedded down by one of the head stones. "We knew we somehow had to get the deer out," Murphy continued with the story. "It wasn't safe there."

Even though there's a fence around it, the gates are open during the day. They feared that the deer might get out into the Southfield Road traffic and endanger itself and passing motorists.

"WE WATCHED it quietly for a while, waiting for the tranquilizer gun to arrive," he said. "A woman whose husband is buried in the cemetery drove up and parked. We were afraid she might wake the deer and frighten it and make it bolt."

"We went to her and asked her to leave the area for awhile. But it didn't work. The deer must have heard her and took off."

In panic, it began trying to jump the fence. But the fence was too high. "It kept running at the fence and bouncing off. It wouldn't slow down. I cringed every time it hit the fence, it was tearing up its face."

Meanwhile, the tranquilizer gun was delivered. More police and other employees from Beverly Hills arrived. Cemetery personnel were there too.

"We needed the best marksman we could find so we got Officer Steve Standfast of Beverly."

"We finally got the doe cornered over behind the equipment building in the cemetery and Steve took three shots at it. The darts just bounced off."

"IT RAN to a corner of the fence and got stuck in some bushes. I ran up with a dart and injected it by hand. And the deer, so exhausted from running and fear, laid down."

"We tied its hoofs with rope and checked it for wounds. It was bleeding from the mouth, but other than that, it seemed in pretty good shape."

"We tied it on a stretcher (carried in the animal control van for large dogs), loaded her into the van and took her to Gasow (veterinary hospital in Birmingham)."

"Doctors there checked her vital signs and said she seemed to be in pretty good shape. Her lip was torn and they proceeded to sew her up."

Murphy, relieved, went to a telephone to find someone to care for the doe during her recuperation and also to call the zoo to find out what kind of

tranquilizer to get if they needed more for the animal.

MURPHY CONTINUED: "I walked back into surgery and looked at the deer."

"She looked at me as I walked in. Her eyes rolled back and she expired. They doctors said it was cardiac arrest."

"I guess she just gave up. It was just too much for it."

"It was the saddest moment of my two years as an animal control officer. If only we could have left her in the cemetery. If only the gates could have always been closed, we could have."

"But she was just out of place."

"I'm not ashamed to say I went home in tears that something like that could happen. It's a memory I don't want to remember."

I'M WRITING about John Murphy and the incident with the deer because it is worth remembering.

The sad ending of the story doesn't diminish the beauty of John Murphy's love and caring for animals, and of the concerns of all the others who helped. They just weren't able to save her, that's all.

No mystery in why former priest turned to crime

William X. Kienzle is killing fewer Catholics these days. This time around only one malevolent monsignor named Tommy Thompson winds up missing in "Mind over Murder."

When last we left Mr. Kienzle in 1979 he was promoting "The Rosary Murders" from the Center for Contemplative Studies at the University of Dallas. This columnist was in Detroit exploiting Kienzle's middle initial by saying stuff like he's an ex-priest as well.

It's been eight years and two very successful murder mysteries since an order of "Reductio" busted Kienzle back to a laity state. Why talk about his former vocation more than the current one?

Because Kienzle himself can't quit capitalizing on his vast repertoire of all the funny, forbidden and exasperating aspects of the Catholic Church seen through the eyes of his favorite free-lance sleuth, Fr. Robert Koester.

We met again because Andrews & McMeel sent me another free book and because Kienzle, 52, is now a "local angle" by living with his editor/wife, Javan, in Southfield. Besides, I had a great story idea for Mr. (God, don't slip and call him Father) Kienzle.

His novels are populated with thinly veiled Detroit personalities in a city and archdiocese teeming with political intrigue. Why not make Poletown grist for the mill of the sacramental sleuth in all of Kienzle's mysteries?

IT'S A NATURAL. All the elements of dramatic conflict are there for Hollywood producers, who already hold the unused rights to "Rosary Murders." Big business vs. little church, ethnics and blacks vs.



Craig Piechura
business and industry. Power brokers like John Cardinal Dearden and Thomas Murphy pitted against Ralph Nader and the fighting priest of Immaculate Conception, Fr. Joseph Karaszewicz.

Don't expect to see a title like "A Priest is Plugged in Poletown" or "Going My Way — In a Chevrolet" in the paperback racks at A&P. Kienzle makes it clear that while the controversy concerns him, he can't imagine using it in his fiction.

Kienzle doesn't like the way GM dumped the ultimate decision in Cardinal Dearden's lap but says the church is no longer needed in the so-called Poletown neighborhood.

The Poletown plot, he says, is just another in a series of unsolicited suggestions for mysteries he will ignore. Ingratitude like that just may keep him on the best seller list.

With the release of "Mind Over Murder," Kienzle hit the promotion trail Wednesday with such glamorous stops as a student assembly at Plymouth-Canton High School.

After 45 minutes of discussion, "Any questions?" None. "OK, we'll think of something else as I stand up here in front of all of you," Kienzle says, recreating his reception. "I think I've made my last presentation to future adults."

NEXT STOP was the sun-screened office of the Farmington Observer. There, Kienzle says, he doesn't buy the theory that life imitates violence in art.

John Lennon's accused murderer and Reagan's assailant got the idea, police said, by watching Robert DeNiro stalk a senator in the movie "Taxi Driver." However, Kienzle doesn't worry that a reader might kill a Mother Superior after reading one of his books.

"I think if you've got a pathological character prone to be violent, he'll be violent," Kienzle says. "The jerk who shot Reagan would have done it without seeing 'Taxi Driver.'"

On the interview trail, Kienzle said he is usually asked the same three questions:

Q. Why did you leave the priesthood?

Q. Why would a former priest write murder mysteries?

Q. Is your wife a nun?

ANSWERS:

A. He left the priesthood in a continuing disagreement over enforcement of 2,414 Canon Laws, particularly the church's trials and tribunals over marriage and divorce.

A. He wrote the first mystery to make his mortgage payment. There aren't a lot of jobs for out-of-work theologians.

A. His wife, Javan, is not and has never been a nun. She's a copy editor who used to work for the Detroit Free Press, gave all three mysteries their titles, and occasionally corrects Kienzle's syntax.



William X. Kienzle
no mystery in Poletown

Not winning the war on the waistline

After doing my version of "extensive research" on the topic of behavior modification (I read one book), I decided that this would be a splendid technique for me to use in my never-ending quest for a diet that works. I know I could be a woman if I could just lose 15 pounds! Or at least I'd be a thinner one.

According to my newfound knowledge, if one "rewards" desirable behavior and "punishes" those habits we could all do without, one would stop doing the bad things and only do the good things.

Eating half a pie is a bad thing. Staying on a diet of 900 calories a day is a good thing. Or so I've been told.

I wasn't too keen on the "punishment" aspects of this new technique — life is rough enough already — but the "reward" part seemed to have definite appeal. So I very wisely made a bet with myself. If I could last for seven days on 900 calories a day, I would buy myself Willie Nelson's new album. Next to Kris Kristofferson's body, I think Willie Nelson's voice is the most exciting thing going in country music today.

Starving myself for seven days for Willie would be a breeze.

It all fell apart on day six. As I was driving home from an appointment, I was suddenly overcome with a deep lust for something sweet. I felt like a woman possessed.

My tires squealed as I turned into the first "7-11" on the horizon; I rushed into the store and frantically scanned the aisles searching for something in the way of a tasty pastry.

I had to stifle my shouts of glee as I quickly purchased two pieces of carrot cake. I love carrot cake.



Nancy Walls Smith
I took my prize to a friend's house (it's more fun when you "pig out" with a friend) and had a lovely time with tea, cake and conversation. I was a happy person.

Like the good dieter that I try to be, I went home and recorded the cake in my diet journal. I figured it was good for about 350 calories. Please don't tell me if it's more than that — leave me with some of my illusions.

I had lettuce for lunch.

Soon after a neighbor came knocking on my door with six freshly baked pecan tarts that she wanted me to test. I have nice neighbors. Pecan pie is my very favorite in the world. I had to have those tarts. I won't tell you how many I ate. It's too embarrassing.

As we sat down for tea and tarts, I realized that day six of the 900-calorie plan was shot to heck.

Later that same fat afternoon, my dear mother brought home my 4-year-old son. Grandma and my loving offspring had spent the entire afternoon baking chocolate chip cookies. "Mom, you gotta taste these cookies I made for you!" How could any mother refuse cookies baked by her own 4-year-old?

I ate a few until I started to develop a severe case of "cookie fever." So far, during this one day, I had consumed carrot cake, pecan tarts, lettuce and chocolate chip cookies.

I ate a pork chop for dinner, hoping there were at least a few vitamins in it to ward off the fat cells from completely conquering my body.

That same evening, my husband went on an errand and returned home with milkshakes for everyone. Strawberry for me. Such a thoughtful gesture; I just couldn't hurt his feelings by refusing it. Oh dear, looks like no Willie Nelson for Nancy. Burp.



Inmates' ABCs: societal must

Last time I was in the Smith Center at George Washington University, it was to watch Congressman Bill Brodhead play basketball.

I was in Washington D.C. to visit my son Bruce, then a freshman law student at GWU. It was a lot of fun watching the legislators play GWU students, but for the life of me, I can't recall who won.

We returned last week to attend the commencement of the National Law Center in that same gymnasium. This time we were all winners, graduates and families.

Supreme Court Chief Justice Warren E. Burger, suffering from fever and a sore throat, got out of his sick bed to speak to the graduates.

With my proud parents, my husband Jack, and daughter Tzvia, I was there peering down, hoping for a glimpse of Bruce as the 400 graduates marched in.

High in the bleachers, next to us, a large happy family was there to see the matriarch of the family, 47, get her law degree.

Another diploma recipient was charged by two small children and a pregnant wife as he descended the dais. It was a happy time for a lot of people.

JUSTICE BURGER, who received a doctor of laws, spoke of unhappy things. He talked about the penal system, calling the nation's prisons "a disaster."

For those of us who returned to Michigan to news of riots and arson at Jackson, Ionia and Marquette, his talk was amazingly pertinent.

Burger warned the graduates that "consequences of the present system will fall on you and your children for a long time" unless something is done to improve the prisons.

Calling for "small steps" but "affordable" ones in terms of the current political and economic realities, he proposed two things.

First, he called on President Reagan and Congress to establish a national academy of corrections to provide training for prison personnel.

Next, he asked that all inmates who cannot read, write, spell or do simple arithmetic be forced to learn to do so.

"The number of young, functional illiterates in our institutions is appalling," Burger said. "Without these basic skills, what chance does any person have of securing a gainful occupation when that person is released and begins the search for employment — with the built-in handicap of a criminal conviction?"

Burger, who has taken his lumps for attacking the legal system for being too lenient on criminals and also for the quality of attorneys practicing currently, said some may consider "the mandatory aspect as harsh."

So he suggested, and the audience laughed heartily when he did, that the total work and study hours for the inmates "be no greater than we demand of the thousands of law students."

GUARANTEEING no sure result, the Chief Justice said: "If we accept the moral proposition that we are our brother's keepers and that there is a divine spark in every human being — hard as this is to believe sometimes — we must try."

A great deal was required of these law school graduates. Many consider law school itself as having been cruel and unusual punishment, but no doubt many harsher demands await them in life — like studying for and passing the bar exam.

Hundreds of parents and relatives greeted one another asking, "Well, how does it feel to have a lawyer in the family?" When I asked Jack that, he said: "I saw it and I celebrated, but I won't really believe Bruce is a lawyer until I see him behind a desk in his own office and paying income tax."