

# Not guilty

## Verdict reached in fatal fight

By Bill Casper  
Staff writer

One of the two defendants facing murder charges in connection with the May death of a 30-year-old Farmington Hills man was set free Oct. 6 after being found not guilty by a Wayne Circuit Court jury.

Michael Brock, described by Redford police as a drifter from Pineville, Ky., returned home with family members who attended the eight-day trial before Judge Maureen P. Reilly, his court-appointed attorney, Gerald Conley said.

The jury handed down its verdict after deliberating for a little more than an hour, Conley said.

Brock was charged with second-degree murder in connection with the death of Gregory A. Link, the father of a 2-year-old boy, following a May 23 fight outside the Double 00 Pub, 25044 Grand River in Redford Township.

A SECOND man, Douglas Sayers, also charged with second-degree murder in the same incident, is scheduled to go to trial Oct. 21, before Wayne Circuit Judge Paul S. Teranes.

A not guilty plea was entered on Sayers' behalf at arraignment in June before 17th District Judge John Dillon in Redford. He was freed after posting bond.

A not guilty plea also had been entered for Brock after he stood mute at his arraignment in June. After police obtained Brock's identity, he was arrested June 3 in his hometown by Pineville police.

A week later, Sayers, a self-employed iron worker, surrendered to Redford police in the company of his father, Al Sayers.

Brock and Sayers were renting adjoining rooms in a Redford apartment complex on Grand River at the time of the incident, which occurred in the Double 00 Pub's parking lot.

Police, family members and Link's girlfriend, Karen Layden of Livonia, expressed disbelief and disappointment with the verdict.

Layden, the only witness to fight, was not in court Monday when the jury rendered its decision. She said she was informed of the verdict by Redford police.

"I CAN'T believe he was found not guilty," she said in a telephone interview Tuesday. "The verdict is totally wrong."

"I'm disappointed by the verdict," said Redford police Sgt. John Bommarito, who headed the investigation of Link's death. "But that's what the jury decided and we have to live with it."

A member of the Link family, who requested anonymity for fear of reprisal, said, "We're really disappointed. We believe he (Brock) is guilty. But if a jury said he's not, we may have gotten our facts mixed up."

"We're not sure of the facts," she said. "I think maybe there wasn't enough concrete evidence against him (Brock). We just want the truth of the matter."

Conley said he talked to some of the jurors, who told him that they felt the evidence was insufficient to convict Brock, who testified that he was not involved in the fight with Link, a former Westland resident.

Layden testified that two men had hit Link several times in the body with their fists, Conley said.

BUT TESTIMONY by Oakland County Medical examiner Bill G. Brooks, who performed the autopsy on Link, and an attending physician at Boistford General Hospital in Farmington Hills both testified that there was no physical evidence of a beating as described by Layden, Conley said.

Brooks testified that Link died from a skull fracture that resulted in

a blood clot.

Conley said he argued that Link's death may have resulted from a blow to his head after he was knocked down in the fight and fell on a cement parking bumper.

Brock testified that after he left the bar at about 2 a.m., he heard Sayers and Link arguing, Conley said. The next thing he knew, Link was lying on the ground and Sayers said, "Let's go." Conley said in recounting Brock's testimony.

Brock, 25, at the time of the incident, first met Sayers, then 32, on the night of the incident after he asked for a ride from Sayers to get gas for his van, which ran dry at Grand River and Seven Mile in Redford, Conley said.

AFTER GETTING gas for Brock's van, they drove separately to the Double 00 Pub for a drink, Conley said. They met Layden at the bar and Brock conversed briefly with her, he said.

According to Conley, Brock told Layden she smelled good, but that was the only conversation he had with her.

Layden testified that she initiated a conversation with Sayers and challenged him to an arm-wrestling match, Conley said. Afterwards, they returned to their tables, he said.

Brock claimed that he and Sayers left the pub separately, Conley said.

## PTA enrollment peaks

Longacre Elementary in Farmington is the first school in the state to reach 100 percent enrollment in its Parent Teacher Association.

"Only two dozen PTAs in the state reach 100 percent" during a school year," according to information from organizers. "It's a coveted award at the state PTA convention in May."

The group signed 474 PTA members, more than the school's enrollment, at a recent open house and Hot dog Dinner held at the beginning of the school year as a kickoff to the PTA membership drive.

This compares with last year, when the group obtained 100 mem-

bership by spring.

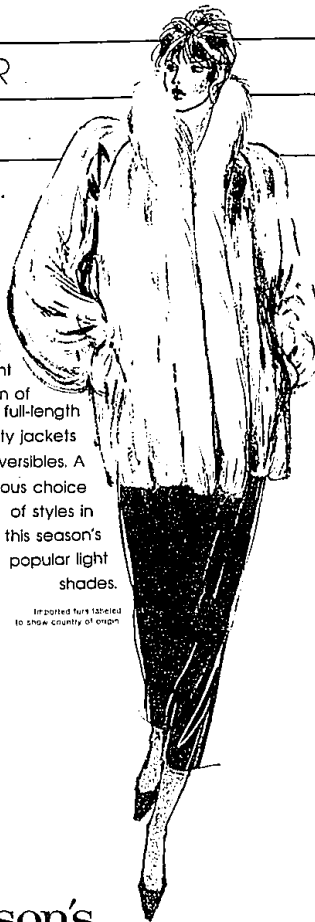
Membership chairwoman Molly Vitlar contacted the state PTA office in Lansing and was told the Longacre group was the first PTA in Michigan to get 100 percent enrollment.

"We've long been proud that 100 percent of our school staff are PTA members too," a release from the local PTA said.

Each PTA member's name appears on a star which is hanging in the Longacre school front hall. Those making it possible included Tina Seed, Lori Brown, Cathy Young, Judy Heikkinen, Alana Greer and Debbie Cornwell.

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