

Angry motorist goes 'batty' in traffic tiff

Farmington Hills police arrested a Hills man after an enraged motorist attacked another driver's vehicle with a baseball bat Monday.

Around 6:30 p.m., a man got out of a 1997 Lincoln Town Car and began hitting the driver's side window of a 1995 Ford Windstar, ordering the driver to get out of the vehicle while stopped at the eastbound light on 14 Mile and Orchard Lake. The Ford Windstar driver phoned police on a cellular phone.

Police stopped the Lincoln Town Car on 14 Mile near Warner Middle School. Officers found a wooden bat, 18 inches long and 1 inch, thick on the seat.

When told why he was being stopped, the man reportedly told police, "Ah, give me a break ... That thing is a bat?"

The man told police he was angry after he had to brake hard to avoid an accident after the driver of the Ford Windstar cut him off, police reports said. He admitted hitting the window with the bat to "scare" the driver.

"I wanted to scare him enough so that he never does that again," the man told police. The man asked the officer if the driver was shaken up and the officer said yes. "Good," the man replied.

The man, who appeared to have been drinking, refused to take an alcohol breath test. He is expected to be charged with felonious assault, possession of a dangerous weapon and malicious destruction of property.

The driver of the Windstar said the Lincoln Town Car cut him off on eastbound 14 Mile, forcing him to brake and swerve into the left turn lane. The Lincoln Town Car was attempting to weave around stopped traffic at the time, the driver said.

FRANK P. FRANCO
Frank P. Franco, 80, died March 28 at his home in Farmington Hills.

Mr. Franco was the former president of Franco & Demantri Construction Company and Cescom, Inc. and part-owner of the Fox & Hound Restaurant. He also held patents for various designs and inventions. He was past president of the Piedmontese Italian Club and a member of the Huron River Hunting & Fishing Club and St. Fabian Catholic Church.

He is survived by son, the Rev. David Franco, O.S.F.S.; daughter, Christina Gerhardt; brother, Eugene; and three grandchildren.

Funeral services were held April 1 at St. Fabian Catholic Church in Farmington Hills. Arrangements were made by McCabe Funeral Home in Farmington Hills.

Memorial contributions may be sent to Oblates of St. Francis de Sales Retirement Fund.

MARY BENEDETTA DIPIETRO
Mary Benedetta DiPietro, 84, died March 27 at her home in Farmington Hills.

Mrs. DiPietro worked for H & R Block.

She is survived by son, Philip (Gail); daughter, Linda Maria DiPietro; three grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held March 30 at St. Fabian Catholic Church in Farmington Hills. Arrangements were made by McCabe Funeral Home in Farmington Hills.

WILLIAM J. CHECKS
William J. Checks, 63, died March 29 at Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills.

Mr. Checks was the marketing director for Livonia Mall and previously owned Checks & Co. He was a Mason and enjoyed oil painting.

He is survived by parents, William and Emma formerly of Farmington; brothers, Thomas (Tamara) of Cheboygan and Robert of Mackinac; sisters, Nancy Cowley of East Tawas and Elizabeth Vance of Gresham.

Private services were held. Arrangements were made by Thayer-Rock Funeral Home in Farmington.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the American Diabetes Association, 30500 Telegraph Road, Suite 2255, Bingham Farms 48025.

DELBERT J. MARKS
Delbert J. "Butch" Marks, 49, of Farmington Hills, died March 29 at Botsford Hospital.

Mr. Marks was a supervisor in the automotive industry and a Vietnam Army Veteran.

He is survived by children, Marlene (Larry) Luitrell, Brandi (Eric) Sule, Chad, Brandon Zeni-Marks and Ashley Zeni-Marks; and three grandchildren.

Funeral services were held April 1 at McCabe Funeral Home in Farmington Hills.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Sarah Fisher Home.

WANDA V. SOKOL
Wanda V. Sokol, 91, of Farmington Hills, died March 29 at Ceutisches Altenheim Nursing Home.

Mrs. Sokol was employed in the Termistad Division of General Motors as a factory production worker.

She is survived by son, William (Joanne); one brother; three grandchildren; and six great-grandchildren.

Visitation is scheduled from 6-9 p.m. Friday, April 4, at McCabe Funeral Home in Farmington Hills. Funeral services will begin at 9:30 a.m. Saturday, April 4, at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church in Farmington.

DR. JOHN WALSANEN
Dr. John T. Walsanen, 46, of Farmington died March 29 at Henry Ford Hospital.

Dr. Walsanen received a National Merit Scholarship and earned a bachelor's degree in communications from MSU. In 1986, he earned a master's degree in industrial design from Wayne State University and in Feb. 1998, earned a doctorate in communication from Michigan Technological University.

Much of Dr. Walsanen's life was centered in the Detroit area. From 1994 to 1998 he was a consultant in CAD/CAM course development for Virtual Services. Combined with scholarship and professional computer applications, he was a life-long lover of music. He performed on fiddle with the Detroit

Aren Scandinavian band Spelmanslag, with concerts in Detroit, the Upper Peninsula and Minnesota. His repertoire included folk, bluegrass, traditional, Irish and Finnish music. He was a member of the Michigan Violin Makers Association and had an extensive collection of antiques, particularly musical instruments and tools.

He is survived by wife, Susan; sons, John Jr. and Thomas; daughter, Ellen; parents, Fred and Helen; brother, Eric; and sister, Christine Katzenstein.

Funeral services were held April 1 at St. Gerald Catholic Church in Farmington. Arrangements were made by Thayer-Rock Funeral Home in Farmington.

KATHLEEN G. POWERS
Kathleen G. Powers, 82, of Farmington, died March 29.

Mrs. Powers was a secretary for the Detroit Board of Education for 17 years and a member of the Vivians of Farmington.

She is survived by son, Michael (Linda) Alexander of Redford; daughter, Susan Kupsky of Brighton; sister-in-law, June Westcott Hogan of Livonia; five grandchildren; and two great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held April 1 at Our Lady of Sorrows Catholic Church in Farmington.

Memorial contributions may be sent to the Make A Wish Foundation, 1669 Hamilton Road, Suite 210, Okemos 48864.

CAMPUS PIPELINE

of Harrison High School.

BIG BREAK

The following Farmington area residents will volunteer at their own expense, as cooks, painters and tutors at 41 sites throughout the country as part of the University of Michigan's Alternative Spring Break program: Jennifer Nichols, Katherine Brady, Jodie Klein, Jeffrey Gutman and Lisa Bagley.

CONGRATS TO GRADS

The following Farmington area residents were among the most recent graduates from Madonna University: Nancy Hewald, Akemi Kurumizawa, Susan Bartley, Julie Ging, Cheryl

McCullough, Jacquellin Scheuer and Brian Somowski.

FINE ARTIST

Siena Heights College senior Andrew Detakas from Farmington Hills, will display his art work in a bachelor of fine arts exhibit March 9-20 at the Klemm Gallery in Studio Angelico. Photographs and multi-media displays will be shown by Detakas, a 1993 graduate of North Farmington High School. After graduation, Detakas plans to attend graduate school and pursue a career in photography and graphics. He is the son of Richard and Rosemary Detakas of Farmington Hills.

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