

# Racial dispute blamed for fight at Walled Lake Western

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Positive Peer Influence is working to avoid incidents like the racially motivated fight at Walled Lake Western High School Thursday involving 25 to 30 students fighting or trying to break up the fight.

"Some were pushing and shoving and others were trying to break things up," said Lois Lange, district spokeswoman.

Assistant principal Don Learmont, who attempted to break up the fight, suffered a sprained wrist after being shoved to the floor. But no one was seriously injured in the incident, which

occurred before 8 a.m., and Oakland County Sheriff's deputies, teachers and administrators were posted in the school halls for the remainder of the day to keep the peace.

"These are really ugly, unfortunate things," said James Geisler, Walled Lake schools superintendent. "We don't tolerate it."

With a school population of more than 1,600, Geisler said, disputes are rare at Western because the Positive Peer Influence group often intervenes before things escalate.

Students who know of problems between other students or those involved in disputes are

**■ The fight erupted inside the school, at 900 Beck in Walled Lake, between a white sophomore male and a male African-American freshman. The incident was preceded by another fight between an African-American student and white student on Wednesday.**

encouraged to approach Positive Peer Influence students who work with teachers as mediators to resolve flutters and prevent violence. Group members was busy Friday counseling students about the importance of handling disagreements peacefully.

"We have very, very few fights," Geisler said. "That's

because these kids are learning ways to deal with their differences... other than their fists.

"When you think about the number of times that 700 kids pass each other (in the hallway), the fact that we have so few incidents is remarkable," Geisler said.

The fight erupted inside the

school, at 600 Beck in Walled Lake, between a white sophomore male and a male African-American freshman, Lange said.

"The white student allegedly said something to the black student and then the fight started," Lange said. "The fight happened around passing time so there were lots of kids, around 25 to 30, gathered in the hall."

Three students were suspended from school pending the outcome of an investigation.

"A third (student) was identified as the student who pushed Mr. Learmont," Lange said of a white sophomore male.

The incident was preceded by another fight between an

African-American student and white student on Wednesday. Those students were suspended and not in school when the Thursday fight occurred, and Lange said she didn't know if any racial comments were involved.

Western principal Gary Bredahl sent a letter home to parents on Thursday asking them to talk with their students about the importance of peace and harmony and advising them that verbal and physical intimidation or harassment would not be tolerated and could lead to expulsion.

## OBITUARIES

**DOROTHY M. SULLIVAN-BRITT**  
Dorothy Mary Sullivan-Britt, 86, formerly of Farmington Hills, died Jan. 20 in Southfield.

Mrs. Sullivan-Britt was a key-punch operator for 31 years at Chrysler Corporation.

She is survived by daughter, Barbara (Andy) Paeres; and grandchildren, Kimberly, Kelly and Bralley.

Funeral services were held Jan. 23, at Thayer-Rock Funeral Home in Farmington with the Rev. Leonard Partensky officiating.

Memorial contributions can be sent to the Visiting Nursing Association Hospice, 25500 Greenfield, Suite 600, Oak Park 48237.

**JENNIE PUMP**  
Jennie Pump, 84, formerly of Farmington Hills, died Jan. 18 at Botsford Hospital in Farmington Hills.

Mrs. Pump was a homemaker. She is survived by sons, Tony (Carolyn) of Northville, Tom (Kathy) of Clarkston, Bob (Debbie) of Livonia and Larry of Wixom; daughters, Susan (Nate) Swanson-Davis of Southfield, Marilyn (Denny) Culloty of Livonia and Barbara Pump of Hudson; sister, Wanda Calunas of

Warren; and 13 grandchildren. Funeral services were held Jan. 21, at St. Michael Catholic Church in Livonia with the Rev. Leonard Partensky officiating. Arrangements made by Thayer-Rock Funeral Home in Farmington.

Memorial contributions can be sent to the Alzheimer's Association, 17220 W. 12 Mile Road, Suite 100, Southfield 48076.

**DONALD E. KOEBEL, SR.**  
Donald E. Koebel, Sr., 76, formerly of Farmington, died Jan. 19 at U of M Hospital in Ann Arbor.

Mr. Koebel was an electrician with Local 58 I.B.E.W. for over 30 years and an Air Corps Air Force veteran during World War II and the Korean Conflict. He was a member of the Odd Fellows for over 60 years and served as Grand Patriarch and Department Commander.

He is survived by wife, Mickey-sons, Donald Jr. (Rena) of Plymouth, Harold (Linda) of Whitmore Lake, Kim (Patty) of Farmington Hills and Richard (Carol) of South Lyon; daughters, Jan (Karen) Wild of Farmington and Riven Burke; brother, Allan of Kentucky; 16 grandchildren; and 18 great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were held Jan. 22, at Thayer-Rock Funeral Home in Farmington with the Rev. Edward Beckstein officiating.

Memorial contributions can be sent to the American Heart Association, 208 S. LaSalle Street, Suite 900, Chicago, Ill. 60604-1197.

**WAYNE CLINE**  
Wayne "Bill" Cline, 82, of Farmington, died Jan. 20 at William Beaumont Hospital in Royal Oak.

Mr. Cline was the owner of Champion Tool Company and a World War II Army veteran. He was a member of the Plymouth Elks Lodge and served as Exalted Ruler, District Deputy and Treasurer and Project Commissioner.

He is survived by wife, Ann; son, William (Mary); daughter, Marcia (Robert) Cline of Argentine Township; and grandchildren: Genevieve, Adam and Daniel.

Funeral services were held Jan. 23, at Thayer-Rock Funeral Home in Farmington with the Rev. Bousquette officiating. Memorial contributions can be sent to the American Diabetes Association, 30600 Telegraph

Road, Suite 2255, Bingham Farms 48025.

**JOSEPH H. KOLINSKI**  
Joseph H. Kolinski, 85, of Birmingham, died Jan. 19 at his home.

Mr. Kolinski was employed by the Detroit Times from 1933 until it was purchased by the Detroit News and continued employment with the Detroit News until his retirement in 1979. He enjoyed collecting books and rocks from the beaches of Lake Michigan and Lake Superior. He also enjoyed golfing and gardening.

He is survived by wife, Margaret; children, Ralph (Bobby) of Harper Woods, Betty (Jeff) Walter of Los Angeles, Calif., Peggy (Gary) Wescott of Flushing, Mary (John) Moritz of Jacksonville, Fla., Jerry (Annie) of Rochester, Jack of Coral Gables, Fla., Dottie (David) Gubow of Huntington Woods, Joe (Alison) of Riverdale, N.Y., Jim (Kathy)

of Farmington Hills, Patty (Bill) Ward of Birmingham, Bob of Hamtramck and Jeanne (Glenn) DeLong of Shelby Township; 29 grandchildren; one great-grandchild; and several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held Jan. 22, at Holy Name Catholic Church in Birmingham. Arrangements made by Lynch & Sons Funeral Home in Clawson.

Memorial contributions can be sent to Beaumont Hospice Fund, 3001 W. 13 Mile Road, Royal Oak 48073-9952.

**MICHAEL A. GIBSON**  
Michael A. Gibson, 51, of Farmington Hills, died Jan. 19 at home.

Mr. Gibson was a numerical control specialist for Ford Motor Company and a Vietnam War Marine Corps veteran. He was a recipient of the Good Conduct Medal, the National Defense Medal, the Vietnam Service Medal, and the Vietnam Campaign Medal. He was a canine

nutrition specialist and owned his own personalized children's book service, trophy and award service, lawn services and video-transfer service. Mr. Gibson

enjoyed working with youth and developed a Christian baseball league and a girl's basketball team. He was also a member of Warendale Community Church in Dearborn.

He is survived by wife, Carol; son, Michael Jr.; daughters, Jennifer Gibson and Alaina Perry; mother, Marjorie Gibson; sister, Bonnie Schluetz; brothers, William Jr. and Robert; and grandson, Cody Gibson.

A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Monday, Jan. 25, at Warendale Community Church in Dearborn.

Memorial contributions can be sent to the Karmanos Cancer Institute, 3807 Monroe, Dearborn 48124; attention Karmanos Community Outreach Education Fund.

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