

LOCAL NEWS

AN EDITION OF THE COMMERCIAL APPEAL | TUESDAY, JANUARY 30, 2007

Intruders beat Cordova homeowner

Woman sexually assaulted; 6 children uninjured

By **JON W. SPARKS**
sparks@yourappeal.com

Two adults and six children were terrorized by three men in a home invasion in Cordova early Sunday.

A man was beaten and a woman sexually assaulted before the intruders fled with an undetermined amount of money and a rifle. The children, none older than 15, were unhurt.

The Shelby County sheriff's office said the incident happened in the 1300 block of Broadstone Lane just after 2:30 a.m. Sunday.

The man who lives at the house told officers

the intruders broke in through a back door. They threatened to kill him, the woman and the children at the house if the homeowner did not give them money.

The victim said one intruder was armed with a pistol equipped with a laser sight.

Steve Shular, public affairs officer with the sheriff's office, said, "They kept demanding money and hitting him on the back of the head. The victim eventually was able to get to money that was there and they ended up getting that and a rifle."

The intruders bound the victim's hands with duct tape and an appliance cord and ransacked

the house. One of them sexually assaulted the woman who was visiting the house.

They also kicked open a bedroom door where two of the children slept. Those children, and four others elsewhere in the house, were not injured.

Shular said the victim told investigators he had various business interests in the area and assumed the intruders thought he might have cash at his home.

Deputies said the victims did not see the faces of the attackers. They were in their late teens or early 20s, they said.

One suspect wore a "Jason" ice hockey mask

similar to the one featured in the "Friday the 13th" movie. That man wore a brown jacket with a hood.

Another suspect wore a dark-colored jacket, possibly with a hood. No description was available for the third man.

Shular said the homeowner was not linked to any criminal activity. He also said the department was investigating whether this attack was related to any others.

Anyone with information is asked to call the Shelby County sheriff's office at 379-7625 or Crime Stoppers at 528-CASH (2274).

— Jon W. Sparks: 529-2533

'Alive at 25'



Photos by A.J. Wolfe/The CommercialAppeal

Wayne Gutch, a University of Memphis professor, teaches Alive at 25 to students at Houston High School. The class is designed to teach responsible driving to high school students.

Instructor drives home a sobering fact: Wrecks are your No. 1 killer

By **ALEX DONIACH**
doniach@commercialappeal.com

WAYNE GUTCH RELIES ON a no-nonsense approach when it comes to teaching teens the dangers of driving.

"If you get into a wreck, you have a 50-50 chance of breaking your back," Gutch says to a classroom of wide-eyed ninth-graders at Houston High School. "If you aren't killed, I guarantee you will be sore. You won't be able to take a deep breath without feeling like there's a knife in your lungs."

Gutch teaches the five-day "Alive at 25" workshop to students in Germantown and Collierville. Led by the University of Memphis, the driver's education program is designed to

warn teens that car accidents are the leading cause of death in young people, among other sobering facts.

Only one teenager has died

Please see **ALIVE, B5**



If "most young drivers just don't think about the risks," they do after listening to Gutch.

'ALIVE AT 25'

WHAT: Driver's education program designed to warn young people (ages 14-20) about dangers of car accidents.

WHERE: U of M South Campus.

WHEN: Feb. 25 and March 25, 1-5 p.m.

COST: For these public sessions, \$35 per student. Register at 678-6000 or online at umce.memphis.edu.

WORKSHOPS: Private workshops also can be arranged by calling the U of M's Department of Continuing Education at 678-6000.

Vander Schaaf says she was assaulted

Claims ex-football star Crawford attacked her

By **LAWRENCE BUSER**
buser@commercialappeal.com

Former longtime Memphis City Council member Pat Vander Schaaf has filed complaints this month alleging that former Memphis football star Xavier Crawford assaulted her in her home.

In complaints filed with Memphis police, Vander Schaaf said Crawford came to her home Saturday, grabbed the back of her neck and threatened to kill her if she called police.

She told police he was angry that she would not go to the bank and get money for him.

In another complaint, Vander Schaaf told police a week earlier that Crawford assaulted her verbally and physically, including pouring a beer on her head.

Vander Schaaf told police Crawford had "conned" her into letting him move into her condominium in Raleigh last year because he was having marital difficulties.

Vander Schaaf, 63, served 28 years on the Memphis City Council until losing her seat in 2003 following a shoplifting incident several years earlier and criticism of her attendance record.

Crawford, 36, was the highly

touted "X Man" running back who scored more than 500 points for Trezevant High School and was the Tennessee Class 2A Mr. Football in 1987. He signed with the University of Memphis in 1988.

No charges have been filed against Crawford, whose arrest history over the past 15 years includes burglary, sexual battery and an order of protection. No information was available on those cases.



Pat Vander Schaaf

Xavier Crawford

He also has been arrested on driving charges and a paternity case.

Neither Crawford nor Vander Schaaf could be reached for comment Monday.

—Lawrence Buser: 529-2385

Master plan for schools detailed

Includes closings, change in grade configurations, attendance boundaries

By **DAKARAI I. AARONS**
aarons@commercialappeal.com

Memphis City Schools on Monday night unveiled a polished version of the first year of its master plan, which will make the most sweeping changes to school attendance boundaries in three decades.

Attendance boundaries at 97 schools have been changed under the plan and several schools are also changing grade configurations.

The plan also includes the closure of Lauderdale, Hollywood and Maccon elementary schools.

The Memphis Board of Education approved the \$29 million plan last month, and the staff brought the final version to the meeting to show board members the implementation.

The changes are the first part of a five-year plan that will erase all vestiges of desegregation-era busing patterns.

The plan, which also calls for improvements and upgrades at several schools, is part of the district's shift back to neighborhood and community-based schools.

Memphis City Schools Supt. Carol Johnson said staff members, working in conjunction with the district's architectural consultants, made sure not to move students this year who

Please see **PLAN, B2**

ON THE WEB

Details, school boundary maps are attached to this story at commercialappeal.com



MY LIFE
FOCUS ON KIDS

One great kid

Michael Taylor is a member of the National Honor Society. | **B3**

INSIDE

Rush is on

Getting an early start: Parents get in line for spots in city's optional schools. | **B6**

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

GREATER MEMPHIS

Leading Memphis on

Leadership Memphis and Executive Leadership International's second Professional Development Program, "To the Top: Taking Your Seat on Boards and Commissions," is Thursday, 8 a.m. to noon at the Crescent Club, 6075 Poplar. Call 278-0016.

N.Y. crooner at BPACC

At 7 p.m. Friday, Scott Coulter will take the stage at the Bartlett Performing Arts and Conference Center, 3663 Appling Road, for a cabaret-style dinner show. Tickets are \$30. Call 385-6440.

First Friday Bluegrass

The Historic Ruffin Theatre in Millington continues its First Friday Bluegrass series at 7 p.m. with local group Will Tell. Call 476-3439.

NAWBO and leadership

The National Association of Women Business Owners will hold its Leadership Series 8:30-11:30 a.m. Friday at Parmasters Golf Training Center, 888 S. White Station. The cost is \$45, free for NAWBO members.

Call 844-3738 or see nawbomemphis.org.

Hunter talks wild game

Former Memphian Brodie Swisher will be the featured speaker at Cherry Road Baptist Church's annual Men & Boys Wild-Game Dinner at 6:30 p.m. Friday. Admission is free. Joining him are TWRA information/education chief Don King and Germantown's Buck Gardner. Call 743-5067.

Yee Haw!

The annual Bill Pickett Invitational Rodeo, the nation's only black touring rodeo, is this weekend at Agricenter International Showplace Arena. A children's matinee at 10:30 a.m. Friday is \$7, and a full show is at 7:30 p.m. Saturday. For the Saturday show, advance tickets are \$18, \$12 for children and seniors; at the gate its \$20, \$15 for children and seniors.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Army Private First Class **Ira Q. Reeves** has graduated from basic combat training at Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C. He is the son of Clarissa Reeves of Northeast Memphis and the grandson of Bonnie Reeves of South Memphis and a 2006 graduate of Kingsbury High School.

Continued from page B1

ALIVE

since the program was adopted by Germantown high schools 12 years ago, after more than a dozen teens died in the previous five-year period. Collierville adopted the program in 1999.

"The numbers show this course works," said Gutch, who is also an instructor in the department of health and sports sciences at the U of M. "Kids really respond when you give them some information and you let them make their own decisions based on the facts."

The U of M hopes to spread the program to classrooms beyond the suburbs, according to Vicki Murrell, the director of professional and continuing education at the U of M. Every teenager in Shelby County could benefit from Gutch's instruction, she said.

"We would love to see companies sponsor this course in Memphis City Schools," Murrell said, adding that the course costs about \$18 per student, "which is so reasonable if

you think about how many lives it saves."

Germantown spends \$15,000 to put the program in schools each year.

It's no secret that driving is the leading cause of death for teens. The National Safety Council says that three out of four teenage deaths are caused by traffic accidents. Each year about 300,000 teens are injured in car crashes; more than 3,500 are killed.

"Most young drivers just don't think about the risks," Gutch said, an assertion supported by a study released Thursday.

Conducted by the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia and State Farm Insurance, the study asked more than 5,600 high school students in America about their driving habits.

About 94 percent of young drivers often are distracted by cell phones, loud music or other teens in the car, and of those teenagers, 85 percent said they often drive with loud music while 79 percent admitted to singing along. When it comes to cell phones, 89 percent admitted to talking while driving.

"The average teenager doesn't have an accident in the first three

months and then they let their guard down," Gutch said.

Maryanne Macdonald, U of M's former director of professional and continuing education, helped Gutch develop Alive at 25 based on a similar course created by the National Security Council.

"Giving keys to a teenager is like handing them a loaded gun," Macdonald said. "We want students to know the risks before it is too late."

The program has seen so much success in Germantown that the city was named one of "100 Best Communities for Young People" last Thursday by the Alliance for Youth, which specifically cited the successes of Alive at 25 for its ability to reduce traffic fatalities.

Kelly Richardson, a Houston High ninth-grader, won't get her license for another two years, but said she was thankful for the early lesson.

"Mr. Gutch has made me more aware of what I'm supposed to do," she said.

Added Gutch: "I'm not going to lie or sugarcoat anything. I'll let parents do that."

— Alex Doniach: 529-5231