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Waukesha County's Daily Newspaper

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"Her passions truly were her children and teaching. She loved her family."

— Paul Jenkins
Jennifer Bukosky's stepfather

"She had the most remarkable smile. Her smile could speak more than anything else in the world."

— Michael Bukosky
Jennifer Bukosky's husband

"This was still a new family, but the love was very strong."

— Steve Bukosky
Michael Bukosky's father

"She treated us like she would her own kids."

— Jordan Raether
OHS junior

"It is miserable to think that she will not be at school tomorrow."

— Derrick Krenke
OHS senior

Family mourns death of three from car crash

10-year-old daughter dies Saturday at hospital

By JEFF RUMAGE
Freeman Staff

OCONOMOWOC — Jennifer Bukosky left behind a loving family when a traffic accident killed her, the baby in her womb and her 10-year-old daughter, Courtney Bella.

Courtney Bella died Saturday at Children's Hospital in Wauwatosa, family members said. The crash happened Friday at Highway 67 and Pabst Road.

"She was the only person I knew that could walk into the room, and everything changed."

— Michael Bukosky
Jennifer Bukosky's husband

the accident at Summit Avenue and Pabst Road. "She had the most remarkable smile. Her smile could speak more than anything else in the world."

"This was still a new family, but the love was very strong," added Michael Bukosky's father, Steve Bukosky, of Waukesha.

A loving family

Jennifer and Michael first met in his pet store, Aquatic World, Steve Bukosky said.

"She would take the kids into the store to get pet supplies. Michael offered to help set up her fish tank and the relationship began from there," Steve Bukosky said. "She would make lunches for Michael and the kids when they were at the store."

Steve Bukosky said the family would have celebrated Jennifer's 40th birthday Saturday.

"Michael was putting together a book of pictures from their trip and their new life together and planned on giving it to Jennifer for her birthday," he said. "He made a cake for her yesterday with her son, Zach, who in one moment has lost most of his family."

He said 12-year-old Zach and his sister split time with their father, who also lives in the Oconomowoc area, and their mother.

Jennifer Bukosky celebrated the future arrival of her

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Submitted photo

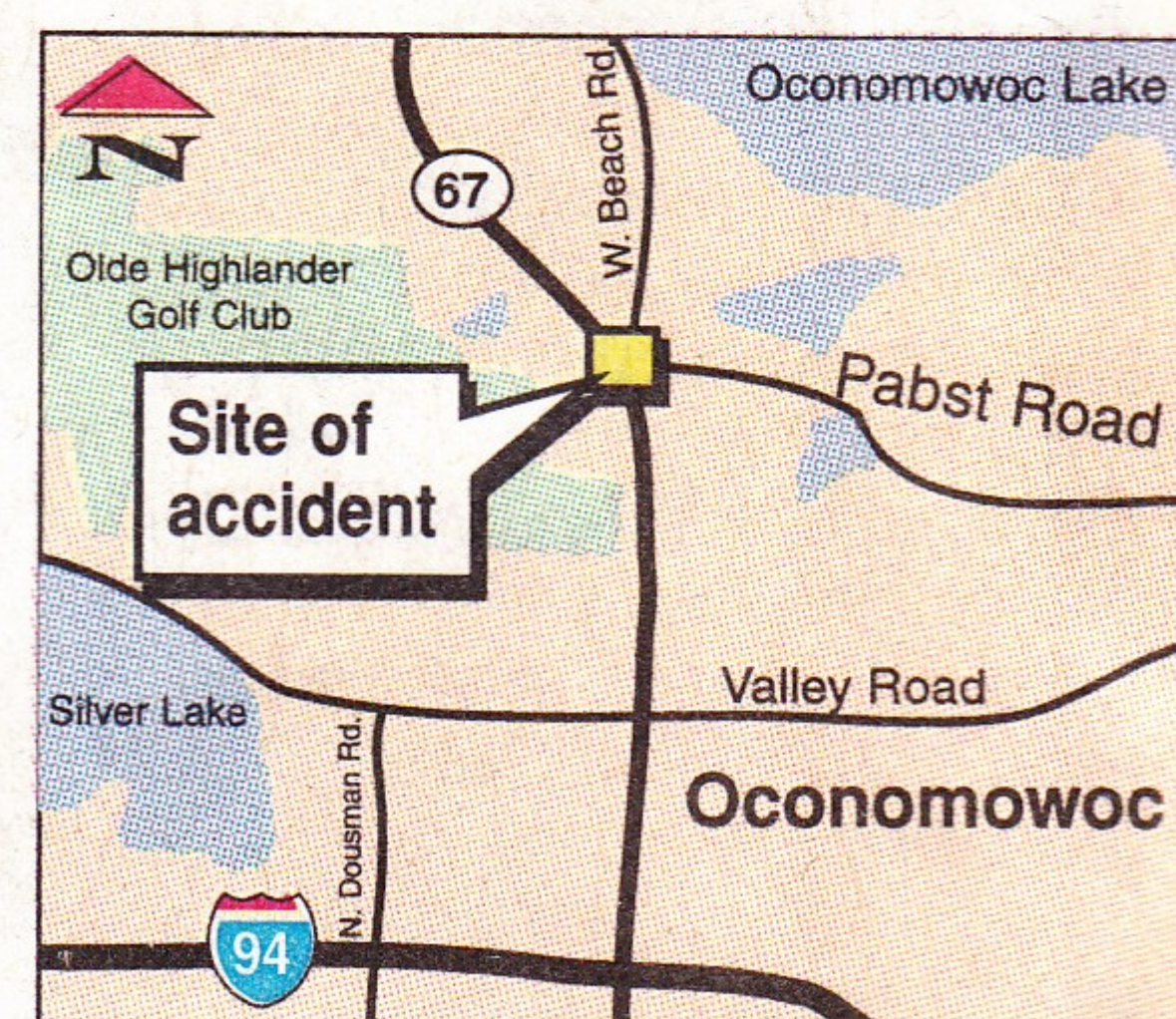
Oconomowoc High School Associate Principal Jennifer Bukosky is seen in this photo with her daughter, Courtney Bella, 10. Jennifer, seven months pregnant with her unborn child, who was to be named Sophia, and Courtney Bella were all killed after a two-vehicle crash Friday.



Oconomowoc High School students created a memorial this weekend for their associate principal and former English teacher, Jennifer Bukosky, who died in a car accident Friday at Summit Avenue and Pabst Road. From left, sophomores Nicole Nelson, Kristi Brock and Chelsea Sonntag share memories of Bukosky on Sunday afternoon. Friday's crash also killed Bukosky's unborn child and her 10-year-old daughter, Courtney Bella.

Jeff Rumage/Freeman Staff

Escalade driver convicted of 3rd OWI on Wednesday



By JEFF RUMAGE
Freeman Staff

OCONOMOWOC — Investigators on Sunday analyzed the site of an accident that killed Oconomowoc High School Associate Principal Jennifer Bukosky and her two daughters Friday.

The investigators from the Wisconsin State Patrol Technical Reconstruction Unit said they were assisting the Oconomowoc Police Department in analyzing the tire marks, road design and human factors that might have contributed to the crash at Summit Avenue and Pabst Road.

Mark Benson, 55, of the town of Summit, is in custody at the Waukesha County Jail awaiting possible charges for driving the Cadillac Escalade that fatally struck Bukosky's vehicle, said Lt. Neil Dussault of the Waukesha County Sheriff's Department. On Wednesday, Benson was convicted in Waukesha County Circuit Court of third-offense operating while intoxicated, a misdemeanor, and had his license suspended, according to online state court records. That case stemmed from a July 22 incident in which he was arrested by Brookfield police, records showed.

Tonya O'Brien, owner of Apple Nutrition at the intersection of the fatal accident, was stocking shelves with her 18-year-old daughter, Kyra, when they heard the loud "boom" Friday afternoon.

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Family

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baby daughter April 20 with friends and family at her mother-in-law's home in Waukesha.

"My wife (Patricia) went all out on the baby shower for Jennifer and our (other) daughter-in-law, who were both expecting girls," Steve Bukosky said. "We were excited to see our two granddaughters to grow up together."

Jennifer Bukosky grew up in Glen Ellyn, Ill., and attended Glenbard West High School. She received her undergraduate and master's degrees from the Univer-

sity of Wisconsin-Madison.

Jennifer Bukosky's father, Michael Farney, of Aurora, Ill., met with other family members Sunday at the site of the memorial. He said his daughter was especially close with her brother, Sean Farney, of Wheaton, Ill., who also mourned his sister's death Sunday.

"Since she was a baby, she and her brother have been inseparable," Michael Farney said. "In everything she did, she excelled."

Jennifer Bukosky also coached her son's soccer team for years, said her stepfather, Paul Jenkins of Mequon. He said she was born to be a teacher.

"Her passions truly were her children and teaching," Jenkins said. "She loved her family."

Visitation, funeral plans

Funeral arrangements are being coordinated by Pagenkopf Funeral Home. Visitation for family and friends will be held from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m. Thursday at the funeral home. From 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. Wednesday, a visitation for Oconomowoc students only will be held at the funeral home. A funeral Mass will be held at 10 a.m. Friday at St. Jerome Catholic Church.

Details of the funeral for Courtney Bella are still being finalized.

The accident happened at about 3:30 p.m. Friday when a black Honda Accord driven by Bukosky that was also carrying three juvenile passengers was struck in the

back by a black Cadillac Escalade driven by a 55-year-old man, according to an Oconomowoc Police Department news release. The Waukesha County Sheriff's Department on Sunday identified that man as Mark Benson of the town of Summit.

Jennifer's Bukosky's son, Zach, was also in the car at the time of the accident. He was treated for injuries at Oconomowoc Memorial Hospital and then released.

Also in the car was a young girl, a friend of Courtney Bella's. She remains in critical condition at Children's Hospital in Milwaukee.

(Jeff Rumage can be reached at jrurumage@conley.net)

Driver

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Kyra O'Brien estimated the black Cadillac Escalade struck Bukosky's vehicle on northbound Summit Avenue at nearly 60 miles per hour. Kyra O'Brien said the driver of a silver sports utility vehicle in front of him swerved into an outside lane, but Bukosky, who was in front of the silver SUV, did not have a chance.

"He didn't even try to stop when he saw the Honda (driven by Bukosky)," Kyra O'Brien said.

The driver of the silver SUV was the first to jump out of the car, and a large crowd gathered quickly to help.

"It was pretty frantic actually," Kyra O'Brien said.

Kyra O'Brien said the first emergency vehicle arrived about 10 minutes after the crash. She said another 45 minutes passed before crews could cut open the top of the car and remove the three children.

"They did a fantastic job," she said. "I've seen some really bad accidents, but I've never seen anything quite that bad."

A statement from the Oconomowoc Police Department reported that Benson was treated for minor injuries at Oconomowoc Memorial Hospital and then taken to the Waukesha County Jail.

Added Tonya O'Brien: "It was heart-wrenching watching (the emergency rescue worker's) faces. You could tell they were trying so hard."

Tonya O'Brien said Benson was limping and distraught when he got out of the vehicle.

"He had his head in his hands. He looked like he was about to rip out his hair," she said.

She said the accident has impacted her as she learned more about the family affected.

"It shows how fragile life is," Tonya O'Brien said. "It is a helpless feeling knowing that you are at the mercy of fate."

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