

Another headache in Vineland's head-of-class fracas

■ The valedictorian issue has been settled, but now the official record of class rank is a sticking point.

By THOMAS BARLAS

Staff Writer

VINELAND — Students involved in a controversy that left Vineland High School's graduating class with co-valedictorians this year are now involved in a debate over official class

rankings.

An alleged recalculating of class rankings for seniors Blake Pescatore, Ivonna Dumanyan and Matthew Wolfe, and the district's supposed refusal to correct their formal school records, has created new problems.

That recalculating moved Pescatore from first to third, Dumanyan from second to first, and Wolfe from third to second, said Dumanyan and Wolfe's mother, Wendi Carlon-Wolfe.

Dumanyan said she learned of the recalculating during a Wednesday meeting in which she agreed to a district proposal to serve as co-valedictorian with Pescatore. Dumanyan said she accepted the offer to help put an end to the controversy.

Carlon-Wolfe said Dumanyan told her about the class-rank change. Carlon-Wolfe said she confirmed the changes through officials at the high school.

However, Dumanyan and Carlon-Wolfe said they were now stunned that, even though the district essentially admitted the original class ranking that caused the valedictorian flap was flawed, it will not change official school records.

Dumanyan said that she had been accepted at Duke University but that her "dream" was to attend the University of Pennsylvania and row crew for the school. She said being

officially designated on school records as first in her class could help that dream come true.

More important, she said, the issue is simply one of fairness on behalf of the school district.

"I want to make sure this will not happen again," Dumanyan said.

"My son is No. 2 because he earned No. 2," Carlon-Wolfe said. "If

□ See Vineland, A5

LINWOOD HOMICIDE

Friends recall Kauffman as upbeat, finding success

Prosecutor: City faces no more risk than before killing

By ROB SPAHR

Staff Writer

LINWOOD — April Kauffman spent Wednesday night talking to friends for hours on the phone, relishing recent achievements and dreaming out loud about future possibilities.

"We talked for probably an hour and a half (Wednesday) night, and she was very, very positive," said Atlantic County Veterans Services Director Robert Frolov, who worked with Kauffman on several veterans-related issues. "She was probably at the peak of her vitality, where everything she was working for over the last few years was finally happening for her."

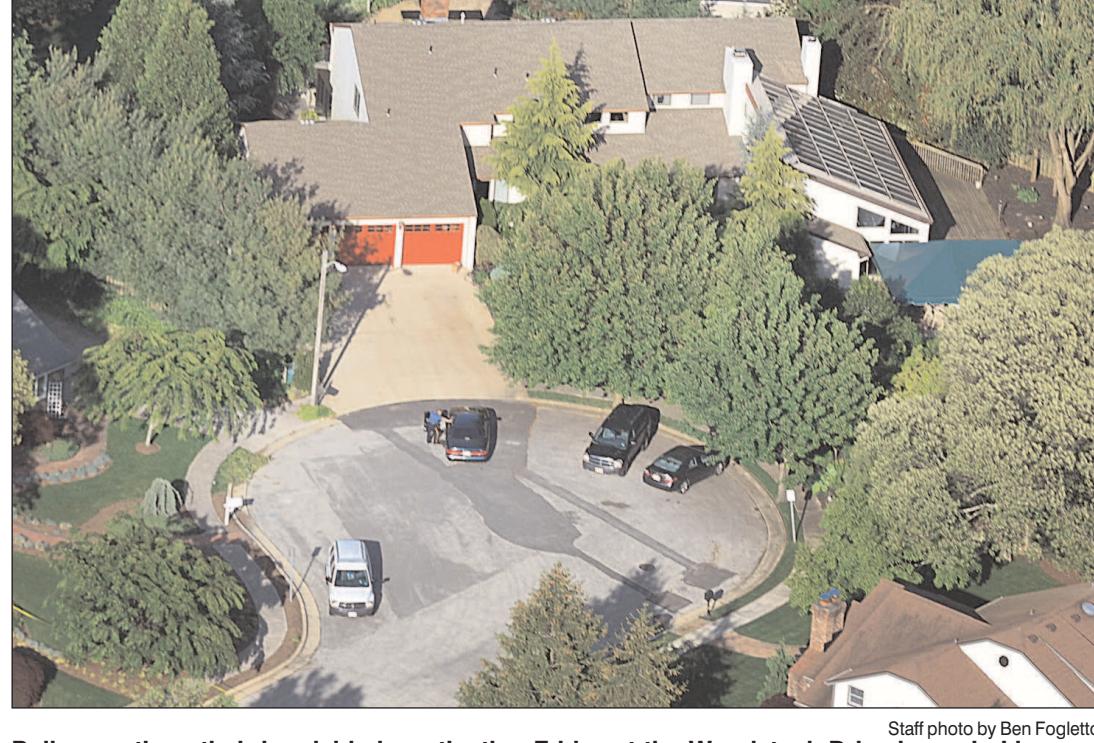
Hours later, however, Kauffman's family and friends were mourning her after she was found shot multiple times in the bedroom of her lavish Woodstock Drive home.

Kauffman's house was still a cordoned-off crime scene Friday, with police tape and lingering spectators, as authorities continued investigating her death — work that Atlantic County Prosecutor Ted Housel said Friday "should ultimately result in a successful investigation."

He said Linwood residents should not feel any more threatened for their safety than before the killing, but they should always keep alert for anything suspicious.

"I don't think the citizens of Linwood should be walking around in a panic," he said. "Neighbors should always be locking their doors. This is 2012, not mid-18th century Kansas."

Authorities towed the vehicle of Dr. James Kauffman, Kauffman's husband, from Woodstock Drive on Friday.



Police continue their homicide investigation Friday at the Woodstock Drive home in Linwood where April Kauffman was found shot in her bedroom Thursday.



Atlantic County Prosecutor Ted Housel, left, and Linwood/Northfield Police Chief Robert James said at a news conference Friday they are confident that the work being done by law enforcement should result in a successful investigation.

Ex-clerk files suit against Galloway council, officials

■ Lisa Tilton alleges she was sexually harassed and forced to resign.

By JOEL LANDAU

Staff Writer

Former Galloway Township Clerk Lisa Tilton detailed her allegations of being harassed, intimidated and improperly fired in a lawsuit she filed Friday against the township's council and high ranking employees.

Tilton, who resigned from her position in October, had filed tort notices against the township

claiming improper termination, sexual harassment and release of her personal information in Open Public Meetings Act requests. She listed damages of more than \$6 million in those tort notices, but no specific number was included in the lawsuit.

In the suit, Tilton's Phillipsburg-based attorney Steven Srenaski details the actions allegedly taken against her by township staff. Srenaski said Friday he and his client would not speak further about the suit.



TILTON

The majority of the claims involve former Galloway manager Stephen Bonanni.

Tilton claims Bonanni sexually harassed her, did not permit her to speak to the council and forced her to resign from the Planning Board.

Tilton said Bonanni improperly fired her in June before they reached an agreement for her to resign. Tilton also said Councilman Dennis Kleiner sought retaliation against her because she did not support his choice of

an engineering firm for the Planning Board. She said Kleiner also filed an improper harassment charge against her and spread false rumors about her personal life.

Tilton also alleges Bonanni improperly conducted a search for a new chief financial officer so he could hire his friend.

Clerk TC Kay, solicitor Mike Blee and former Clerk Karen Bacon are listed in the lawsuit as releasing her personal information. The rest of council — Mayor

□ See Tilton, A7

Veterans get local treatment alternative

■ Military personnel covered by TRICARE can begin getting treatment in Somers Point in June.

By WALLACE MCKELVEY

Staff Writer

Veterans no longer have to leave South Jersey to receive advanced treatments, such as dialysis.

Shore Medical Center confirmed Friday it has been certified by Health Net Federal Services/TRICARE, which provides health care services for active duty U.S. military, retirees with 20 or more years of service and their dependents.

Veterans advocates — including the late radio talk show host April Kauffman — have been seeking the certification for years. While the average veteran likely won't be covered, advocates say the measure is an important step in the right direction.

TRICARE, which is paid for by the Pentagon, provides health care to more than 5 million Americans. The VA, meanwhile, covers the health care costs of veterans wounded in combat. Those covered by TRICARE can begin using the Somers Point medical center June 4.

Veterans who lack private policies and whose conditions cannot be treated at the VA's

□ See Veterans, A9

Heightened bully awareness snares teachers

■ It's unknown if staff-on-student cases are widespread, but more have surfaced.

By DIANE D'AMICO

Education Writer

Jerome Davis' 11-year-old son didn't say anything when a teacher's aide allegedly called him a name and pushed him down in his special-education class at the Charles Spragg School in Egg Harbor City last month.

But another student told his parents, word spread and two parents decided to file criminal charges against aide Brenda Ruth in municipal court — one claiming harassment and Davis' complaint of simple assault. School Superintendent John Gilly confirmed that Ruth was put on paid administrative leave April 20 pending further investigation and the outcome of court proceedings, but he said he

□ See Bullying, A4

N.J. test asks students to write about a secret

A question on a statewide standardized test this week asked about 4,000 third-graders to write about a secret and why it was hard to keep. Responding to complaints, the New Jersey Education Department is reviewing the experimental question. **Story on C4**

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Sunny

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