

# Woman gets \$22.7M judgment

By Gary V. Murray  
TELEGRAM & GAZETTE STAFF

**WORCESTER** — A city woman who suffered severe head injuries in an accident caused by a drunken driver has been awarded \$22.7 million by a Worcester Superior Court judge.

The award to 27-year-old Wendy M. Bloniasz, which resulted from a May 29, 1993, accident on South Quinsigamond Avenue, at the entrance to White City Plaza in Shrewsbury, is believed to be the largest personal injury judgment ever in Worcester County, according to Bloniasz's lawyer, Edward C. Bassett Jr.

Judge Peter A. Velis directed the defendant, John P. Phelan, to pay Bloniasz \$15 million, plus \$7,655,000 in interest. Phelan, 26, formerly of Shrewsbury, was driving the car that struck Bloniasz's vehicle shortly before 2 a.m. on the day of the accident.

Bloniasz, who was thrown from her car, suffered head and brain injuries and underwent three operations. Phelan, who allegedly got out of his car and ran from the scene of the crash, later admitted to police that he had been "drinking all night" at several bars before the accident occurred.

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# Cellucci offers new drug plan for seniors

By Brian S. McNiff  
TELEGRAM & GAZETTE BOSTON BUREAU

**BOSTON** — Gov. Paul Cellucci yesterday injected another prescription drug coverage plan for senior citizens into the state budget impasse.

He said his plan protects the neediest seniors at reasonable cost and provides catastrophic coverage. At the start, the governor would pay for the insurance with \$30 million from the general fund, but then use money from the tobacco settlement when it becomes available.

Both the Senate and House of Representatives adopted prescription drug coverage plans for seniors in their state budget bills but, like many elements of the budget, the plans differ.

The two budgets for the fiscal year that began Thursday are being reconciled by a conference committee.

Turn to **NEW** /Page A7

# And the he



Finding the temperatures in the shade yesterday on Worcester Common almost all benches experienced little relief from the day's extreme heat.

# ER at UMass treats holiday crowd of 240

By Emilie Astell  
TELEGRAM & GAZETTE STAFF

**WORCESTER** — The observed July Fourth holiday was anything but a holiday for the staff at the University of Massachusetts Hospital emergency room.

About 240 patients came into the emergency room Monday for treatment of various ailments. Dr. Gregory A. Volturo, associate chairman of emergency medicine at the hospital, said he wasn't sure if the number was a record, but did note that the emergency room sees an average of about 185 patients each day.

Turn to **LIFEGUARDS**/Back Page

## Tips for cor

1. Turn off unnecessary li
2. Use appliances in the e
3. Avoid using the dryer; hi
4. Try not to open the refri
5. Use outdoor grills, croc
6. Hang shades, drapes o
7. Consider installing wind
8. If you use air condition
9. Spend time in air condit

Source: ISO New England, New Eng

# Drunken driver ordered to pay \$22.7 million

**DRUNKEN** /From PAGE ONE

Four passengers in Bloniasz's car also were injured.

Phelan was sentenced in 1993 to 9 to 10 years in Walpole State Prison after pleading guilty to driving while under the influence of alcohol, driving so as to endanger, leaving the scene of a personal injury accident, driving after revocation of his license and driving an uninsured vehicle.

Phelan was found in default after failing to answer a lawsuit filed by Bloniasz in 1995, according to court records. The default judgment by Velis came after a hearing to assess damages.

While Bassett was not aware of any insurance coverage to satisfy the award, he said he would proceed in an effort to collect the money owed to his client.

"As I told Wendy, I'm going to do everything I can to collect some or all of it," he said.

Bassett said the award, which was issued June 28, "sends a message that society will no longer tolerate drunk driving. Too many lives have been destroyed by drunk drivers. No amount of money can undo the damage done to Ms. Bloniasz," he said.

According to Bloniasz's suit, Phelan admitted to Shrewsbury police that he was "hammered" at the time of the accident and said he had been drinking earlier at several area bars, even though he was only 20 years old at the time.

Also named as defendants in the lawsuit were Point Breeze Lounge in Webster; Casey's Pub, Leitrim's Pub, Suney's, The Blarney Stone and Ye Olde Lamplighter II, all in Worcester; and Bronzo's in Shrewsbury, where Phelan said he had his last drink before the crash.

Bassett said out-of-court settlements were reached with all of the defendants except Phelan. Confidentiality agreements prevented him from disclosing the terms of those settlements, he said.

An impact statement written by Wendy Bloniasz was read by her mother, Janet, at Phelan's sentencing hearing. Phelan was not present.

"I remember getting thrown from the car that night," Bloniasz wrote. "That's the last thing I remember. But that man shouldn't have been driving. He was drunk, and he ran

from the accident. I am an emotional wreck because of what has happened to me.

"I will never be the same again, and for the rest of my life I will have

what happened to me embedded in the back of my mind and what that man did to me," she said.

Phelan and Bloniasz could not be reached by telephone for comment.

## BUY A CAR FOR \$49.00

Westborough, MA - One of Massachusetts' largest Chevrolet & Oldsmobile dealers has decided to liquidate cars to the general public for as low as \$49 dollars. They will be conducting a "super slasher sales event" this Saturday, July 10, 1999 on the premises. Owner, CK Lewis says, "This sale is absolutely necessary, due to the fact that during recent years new vehicle leasing has increased dramatically across Massachusetts creating an overabundance of well-maintained low mileage lease returns. Coupled with trade-ins from our customers, we are left with an enormous used vehicle inventory that **MUST BE REDUCED!** CK Lewis further states, "our used inventory has never been more diversified, we have vehicles from as low as \$49.00 to as high as \$34,995.00. Every vehicle will be **SLASHED**; you will save **THOUSANDS**, I guarantee it." CK Lewis also says he would much rather offer these vehicles to local areas so that they can experience for themselves first hand, super slasher prices. At a "super slasher sale" every car is on sale, first come-first served and no auction bidding is required. In other words, now is the right time to buy a used car at the

absolute lowest price, including cars for only \$49.00 dollars. All used vehicles and "super slasher" prices will be available to the general public at 150 Turnpike Road, Westboro, MA 01581 in front of the showroom inside the designated area at 9:00 AM. CK recommends "be there early, because the last time we conducted this type of sales event we had over 300 people respond by 7:00 AM, and some actually camped out in the parking lot anticipating driving home a car for only \$49.00." Here's how our "Cloverleaf super slasher sale" works. All cars will be secured behind a designated area and unlocked at 9:00 AM so the general public can inspect them. All super slashing starts shortly after that. Every car will display the normal retail-selling price on the windshield. **NO NEED TO WORRY** because the slashing begins soon after you are sitting behind the wheel of the vehicle of your choice, the price will be slashed thousands less than displayed and you will have the first right to buy the car. Example - cars that are priced at \$11,000 could be reduced below \$8,000. Cars that are priced at \$7,000 could be reduced

below \$4,000. In fact there will be many cars priced below \$9,995. Don't forget some will actually be sold for as low as forty-nine dollars (\$49.00) bucks! Be sure to remember all vehicles will be slashed one time and one time only to the absolute lowest rock bottom price! Cloverleaf Chevrolet & Oldsmobile will continue to slash prices on all vehicles until 2:00 p.m. at that time the sale will be completed and customers will be expected to drive all sold vehicles home. Over the past few years, Cloverleaf Chevrolet & Oldsmobile have taken pride in providing the best prices and selection to all our local customers. According to Owner CK Lewis "You will never have an easier time buying a vehicle from us. **NO HAGGLE, NO HASSLE!**" He further states that "this is a prime opportunity for anyone seeking a quality used car, truck, van or sport utility vehicle. You will get the deal you're looking for." All in all, it's a win-win situation for the customer and dealer. Any and all questions are welcome, please call Cloverleaf Chevrolet & Oldsmobile (508)366-9996, 150 Turnpike Road, Westboro, MA 01581. Paid Advertisement

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...paying about \$30 million to cover...  
...the approximately \$50 million...  
...the \$8-billion tobacco settlement.

T&G Staff

## Drug plan Cellucci

questioned how low-income...  
...would be able to come up...  
...the \$750 that is the deductible in...  
...governor's plan.

Paul R. Haley, D-Weymouth, chairman of the House Ways and Means Committee and the lead member of the House-Senate conference committee, expressed...  
...in the governor's proposal. He...  
...he is waiting for an analysis of...  
...Cellucci's plan.

am hopeful the information it...  
...ains may help to further focus...  
...discussions in conference,"...  
...y said.

Mark C. Montigny, D-New Bedford, the Senate Ways and Means Committee chairman and...  
...y's counterpart on the budget...  
...ference committee, said, "I'm...  
...ed that the governor has recog...  
...d the importance of this issue...  
...that his proposal is based on our...  
...print.

ur proposal does more for thou...  
...s of seniors on fixed incomes...  
...een 150 and 200 percent of the...  
...al poverty level," Montigny...  
...The governor's proposal still...  
...es an onerous out-of-pocket ex...  
...e for these seniors. These are...  
...people we should be helping

Cellucci said the administration...  
...done some test marketing and...  
...ded that "a 9-month is af...  
...ble and provides significant...  
...ction for seniors."

## Stay home.

u won't have to look...  
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...month, 2 weeks a year...  
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...ur life. To get your...  
...ure moving, call your...  
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