

## **OFFICER'S ERRANT SHOT AT DEER UPSETS RESIDENTS**

*The Buffalo News (Buffalo, NY)*

Byline: Thomas J. Dolan - NEWS NORTHTOWNS BUREAU

Three days after an errant shot fired from a nearby woods struck their home, a young Amherst couple are still shaken by the thought of what could have happened.

Amherst police say that one of their officers -- **a marksman who is taking part in the town's bait and shoot program to control deer -- fired the round and that the shot ricocheted before hitting the house.**

But that's not good enough for residents of San Fernando Lane, where the bullet landed in the second-floor guest room of a young family's home.

"In my opinion they should not have been anywhere this close to a house," said a woman who lives in the house struck by the bullet. She agreed to an interview Monday on the condition that her name and address not be published.

"When it happens, your instinctive reaction is to be outraged. We felt that at the time and still do," she said.

At about 10:30 a.m. Friday, her husband was working in a first-floor room of the house and the couple's son was staying home from grade school because of illness, she said.

The bullet blew a baseball size hole in their upstairs guest room window and lodged in a picture on the wall.

Amherst police came to the house, and they were "extremely cooperative and extremely sensitive and sympathetic" about the incident, she said, but she added that nobody should be shooting a weapon that close to a house.

Police told her the officer involved was several hundred yards away in the woods, aiming down at a deer from a platform when the round struck something and was diverted toward the houses on San Fernando Lane.

Over the weekend, her husband took a walk into the woods and said it was "not that far."

"If there's a chance of a fluke, they shouldn't be there," the woman said.

According to the town's online map system, the woods are located between Casey and North French roads, covering an area about 1,000 yards long and about 600 yards wide at the midpoint. The map also shows there are houses on three sides of the woods, the nearest of which are located about 300 yards or less from the center of the woods.

According to the woman, her neighbors are aware of the incident and they are "very interested in what's happening." As for her son, she said, it has been "difficult to explain" to him what happened.

Assistant Police Chief Ronald H. Hagleberger told Town Board members Monday that the bait and shoot program will remain suspended until the department concludes its noncriminal investigation of the incident in about three weeks.

Police were withholding the names of the officer who fired the round and the owners of the home that was struck.

"I don't want to have this unfortunate incident stop the program," Amherst Council Member William L. Kindel said, calling the incident "one in a million."

But Council Member Daniel J. Ward disagreed, saying the bait and shoot program is "an accident waiting to happen," because Amherst is not a rural community.

Program officials said they would continue nonlethal attempts to control deer herds during the suspension period.

**Swan Lake tot dies from hunting accident;  
NYC man charged with manslaughter**

By Victor Whitman  
Times Herald-Record  
November 17, 2008

SWAN LAKE — A Swan Lake toddler has died and a New York City man has been charged with manslaughter in the hunting accident on a rural Sullivan County road Sunday afternoon.

State Police have arrested Edward J. Taibi, 45, of Howard Beach for the shooting that they say killed 16-month-old Charly Skala. Around 4 p.m., Skala was standing in the kitchen of her grandparents mobile home at 1338 Horseshoe Lake Road, where the family had gathered to watch football.

- [Tot reportedly shot by hunter in Sullivan County](#)

More

The bullet ripped through a wall and struck her in the area of the right shoulder and neck.

She was taken by relatives in a car to Catskill Regional Medical Center in Harris, then flown to Westchester Medical Center in Valhalla, where she died from her injuries.

Police say Taibi was in a tree stand and shot once at a deer, wounding it. He then fired a second time from about 400 feet away from the mobile home. He was hunting with a .300 Winchester Magnum high-powered rifle.

Taibi was arraigned in the town of Bethel court and taken to the Sullivan County jail on no bail. It is unclear if Taibi broke any hunting rules. He had hunted on the property before and was a friend of the property owner.

Taibi “was very broke up” about the incident and remorseful, investigators say.

The manslaughter charges stems from recklessness.

“His actions resulted in the death of another,” said Chief Investigator Mike Orrego of the State Police’s Liberty barracks.

“He killed a person. You do have the obligation to the safety of others.”

Authorities, led by the state police, were taking measurements on the property Monday morning.

“It is a tragic event,” Orrego said. “I hope this isn’t a sign to come for the remainder of the hunting season.”

The death of a little girl had hunters also shaking their heads in the nearby Swan Lake Country Store.

One hunter called it a freak “needle in a haystack shot.”

Neighbor Chester Davis Jr. said he sometimes saw the toddler playing with her parents and grandparents on play equipment outside the mobile home.

“They are nice people,” he said.

Davis himself was coming home from hunting, when learned of the accident. He could not imagine how a toddler so little and innocent, standing behind the safety of walls and being looked after by her entire family, could be killed in such a way.

“A grown person should be more sensible,” he said.

Reporter Ashley Kelly contributed to this report.



December 10, 2008

## **Hunters shoot through day care window in Howard Co.**

By Tyeesha Dixon | [tyeesha.dixon@baltsun.com](mailto:tyeesha.dixon@baltsun.com)

4:25 PM EST, December 10, 2008

Hunters in Howard County earlier today accidentally shot out the front window of a day care, and police are investigating the incident.

Police received the call from a worker at Kids Time Out day care center in the 5800 block of [Clarksville](#) Square Drive about 1:30 p.m., according to Howard County Police. Employees heard gunshots and glass shattering, police said, so they took the children into a bathroom before making the call. No one was injured, but six children, two employees and a parent were in the day care at the time of the shooting, police said.

Officers located a shattered window when they arrived and a bullet on the window ledge but did not find anything suspicious after searching the immediate area, police said. Behind the day care, police searched and found that two hunters had shot a deer several hundred yards away.

A bullet shot at the deer struck the window, police said. The hunters, who were using shotguns, were farther away than the 150 yards from an occupied dwelling that is required.

Baltimore Examiner - Baltimore,MD,USA

## **Officials debate what's a safe hunting zone**

By [Josh Kowalkowski](#)

Examiner Staff Writer 12/14/08

A bullet from a hunter's rifle traveling more than a football field's distance to shatter day care center window in Howard County raises the question: Just how far away is safe?

"Any distance is safe when the tools are handled properly, said Paul Peditto, acting assistant secretary for land resources with the state Department of Natural Resources. "There are just too many variables built into the types of hunting devices for people to use."

Guns have various degrees of accuracy and range, making establishing a "safe" zone almost impossible, he said.

"It's almost like saying if we lower the speed limit to 40 mph on all highways, it would eliminate all traffic accidents," Peditto said.

County Executive Ken Ulman announced plans to file legislation that would increase the distance that a gun can be discharged from a human-occupied building. The current county hunting code and state law requires 150 yards.

"I realize no one was injured in this incident, but that's because luck was on our side -- this time," he said in a statement because he was on vacation this week.

"We must change the county code to establish a safety zone" which would exceed 150 yards.

County officials agreed that the distance must be pushed back, since the hunter in Tuesday's incident was about 277 yards away when he fired the gun. Because the hunter was in compliance with the law, police made no arrests.

But Peditto said a realistic solution for counties would be banning the discharging of firearms in densely populated areas, with exceptions like law-enforcement purposes.

The probe into changing the law was supported by Felicia Minnix, the director of Kid's Time Out, a drop-in center serving children from 2 1/2 to 11 years old.

"Obviously we're beyond thrilled -- It was obviously a very traumatic day," she said about Tuesday's incident at her Clarksville center.

"I hope they do something to push them back. I never knew bullets traveled more than 150 yards."

In recent years, she said the area has been built up with many more houses and businesses.

She indicated a desire to talk with Ulman to see if she could do anything to help foster changes.

### **Bullet pierces wall in Readington toddler's bedroom**

December 5, 2008

By BRANDON LAUSCH

Staff Writer Courier News/Home News Tribune

<http://www.mycentraljersey.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=2008812050361>

As little Giana DeCampos, 2, sat Friday in her "once upon a princess" chair for a tea party, the girl's bedroom looked like that of many others for a child her age.

Her first name was spelled out in block letters on one of her lavender walls, stuffed animals filled a bookcase and new diapers were at the ready on the floor next to her crib.

Everything looked just about right. Except for the bullet hole.

Two days after a stray bullet pierced the side of their Oriole Road home — entering the master bedroom and continuing into Giana's room, where the projectile finally landed near her crib — the DeCampos family was still reeling yesterday at the thought that a hunter standing a half mile away could errantly shoot into their home and, in the process, shatter their sense of security.

"I feel like I live in a paper house," Lisa DeCampos said as she explained the recent incident with her husband Rui.

According to township police, the bullet was shot from an adjacent farm, where two hunters who are considered possible suspects were found. Local authorities turned the investigation over to the state Division of Fish & Wildlife's bureau of law enforcement, which was continuing to probe the incident yesterday, spokeswoman Darlene Yuhas said.

Yuhas, citing the active investigation, said she could not provide details. Township police said criminal complaints may be filed.

Mrs. DeCampos said she was wakened by Giana before 7 a.m. Wednesday, Dec. 3, and went downstairs with her youngest daughter to watch cartoons. Shortly after 7, Mrs. DeCampos said she heard a noise upstairs that resembled a boom. She recalled thinking it could be a box falling out of a closet.

About an hour later, she went upstairs with Giana to dress her when she saw pieces of lavender sheet rock on the floor, a piece of copper and a nearly two-inch exit hole above the princess table.

At first, Mrs. DeCampos thought a pipe had burst or that Giana was peeling away at an existing hole. But after rousing her husband — who got home late the night before and happened to be sleeping in a spare bedroom on the other side of the house — the family decided it was a bullet and that they needed to call police.

The couple's older daughter, 5-year-old Brielle, was asleep in her own room and was also unharmed.

"To me, it was like a miracle," Mr. DeCampos said. "Nobody got hurt. Everybody was in the right place at the right time."

The bullet, which the DeCampos family said was fired by a .50-caliber muzzleloader, entered the house above a lampshade that sits atop one of two bedside tables in the master bedroom. It continued across the room, hitting a lower spot in the opposite wall between a large dresser and a full-length mirror. On the other side sits Giana's princess table.

Mrs. DeCampos said she'll fight to have the hunters stop shooting around her house, which sits on a quiet cul-de-sac.

"Every time I take my daughter into her bedroom to get dressed, I think, what if we were in her bedroom getting dressed and we got hit with this?" she said. "It's really freaky."

A round of ammunition hit the side of the Oriole Road home of the DeCampos family in Readington, penetrating two walls before landing in the bedroom of, Giana, their two-year-old daughter.

Keith Muccilli / MyCentralJersey

The hole made by the bullet that hit the wall in Giana's room.

### **Hunter's bullet grazes 2 kids at Mich. day care**

Monday, November 24, 2008 | 8:22 AM Stray bullet injures two boys near Cheboygan

ABC12 News

BENTON TOWNSHIP (WJRT) -- (11/22/08)-- Authorities say a hunter's stray bullet grazed two young boys at an in-home day care near Cheboygan.

The Cheboygan County sheriff's department says a 43-year-old woman fired a rifle at a deer on Thursday and the bullet grazed the 3- and 5-year-olds inside Angie's Country Kids Day Care in Benton Township.

The children were playing in the living room when the bullet came through a wall. The Petoskey-News Review report they were treated at Cheboygan Memorial Hospital and released.

One boy was hit in the chest while the other was struck in the leg. Doctors say both came within inches of serious injuries.

Their mothers are still in shock -- but thankful.

"It just makes you realize more and more that everyday could be the last," said Amber Thompson. "It came so close. You just don't know if it would have been another inch -- just one way or the other -- that could have been it."

Authorities say the woman was hunting about 400 yards away, and may not have realized a day care was in the area.

The county prosecutor's office was expected to review the case.

### **Casey Burns Survived a Stray Bullet While Pregnant**

Casey Burns was sitting in her car in the driveway of her North Whitehall Township home, laughing with her sister, brother and

fiancé when somewhere nearby, a gun went off. The bullet penetrated the car window, cracking the glass. Burns' head began to bleed. She was shaking as her family quickly called for help.

Within minutes, emergency crews arrived and began advanced life support. When they learned that Burns not only had a severe head injury but was 7 ½ months pregnant, they called University MedEvac. The helicopter rushed her to Lehigh Valley Hospital. Members of the trauma team told Burns she was in the hospital and would be OK. "Her eyes told us she was scared," says Laurie Cartwright, R.N. A team from the hospital's mother-baby unit monitored the fetus while the trauma team treated Burns and took a CT scan of her brain. They were surprised by what they discovered: the bullet ricocheted off her head, lodging a piece of skull in the area of the brain that controls speech and motor skills.

Casey Burns needed surgery right away. While preparations were underway, staff chaplain Charles Orth sought out Burns' family. He found her mother, Allie Dickinson, outside the emergency department, totally distraught. Orth tried to calm her, reassuring her that her daughter was alive and in good hands. "There's no dress rehearsal for this stuff," he says. "She was trying to wrap her mind around something so unimaginable." He spent several hours with Burns' family, updating them on her care and progress and praying with them.

Over the next three hours, neurosurgeon Stefano Camici, M.D., and his team carefully removed a large blood clot and bone fragment from Burns' brain while anesthesia specialists monitored her and her unborn baby. Burns was lucky. If the bullet had penetrated her brain, there would have been more damage—but as she recovered in the intensive care unit, her doctors still weren't sure she would walk or talk again.

Two days later, Burns opened her eyes and was able to follow her doctors' commands to move parts of her body. The next day, she spoke, and five days later went home from the hospital. Outpatient care helped refine her motor skills and speech.

Burns learned she was accidentally shot by a hunter firing at a deer. "She's a miracle," says trauma chief Michael Pasquale, M.D. "Everyone did a great job caring for her."

A few months later, Burns returned to the hospital to say thank-you to the people who cared for her in those first crucial hours. "If it weren't for you, I wouldn't be here and neither would she," she said, showing the team her three-month-old daughter, Hailey Alexis. Aside from some short-term memory loss, Burns feels great today. She married her fiancé, Robbie Kantner, in March and plans to go to school to become an elementary school teacher.

**In the video from the newscast below, police are quoted as saying a hunter's bullet can travel a mile. Actually, a sharpshooter and hunter's bullet can travel and be lethal for over 3 miles.**

<http://www.wjactv.com/news/18272921/detail.html>

### **Stray Bullet Hits Somerset County Church**

**Saturday, December 13, 2008 – updated: 9:50 pm EST December 13, 2008**

**SOMERSET, Pa.** -- No one was injured Thursday when a stray bullet hit a church in Somerset County.

It happened around 5 pm Thursday when the bullet went through a stained glass window at St. Paul's Presbyterian Church in Somerset.

Eighty elementary students were inside for an after-school group called "King's Kids."

"All the teachers were upstairs with us," said student Samantha Custer. "We looked outside the window and saw the cop cars." According police, the type of bullet used can travel about a mile.

Church officials contacted their insurance company and hope to have the window fixed soon.