

**ATTACHMENT A**

Selected Fatality Rates

	1992	1993	1994	1995
<b>Total Job Related Deaths</b>	6,217	6,331	6,632	6,210
<b>Total Job-Related Homicides</b>	1,044	1,074	1,080	1,024
<b>Total Job-Related Accidental Deaths</b>	5,173	5,257	5,552	5,186
<b>Total Employment (000)</b>	119,583	120,791	124,469	126,248
<b>National Fatality Rate (per 100,000 employees)</b>	5.2	5.24	5.32	4.92
<b>Taxi Driver Deaths</b>				
	106	113	113	99
<b>Taxi Driver Homicides</b>				
	87	97	87	70
<b>Taxi Driver Accidental Deaths</b>				
	19	16	26	29
<b>Taxi Employment (000)</b>				
	214	225	241	213
<b>Taxi Driver Fatality Rate</b>				
	49.5	50.2	46.9	46.5
<b>Petroleum Deaths</b>				
	82	94	99	77
<b>Petroleum Homicides</b>				
	0	0	0	0
<b>Petroleum Accidental Deaths</b>				
	82	94	99	77
<b>Petroleum Employment (000)</b>				
	365	371	387	336
<b>Petroleum Fatality Rate</b>				
	22.5	25.3	25.6	22.9
<b>(1) Electric Power Line Installer/Repairer Deaths</b>				
	37	42	35	34
<b>Electric Power Line Installer/Repairer Homicides</b>				
	0	0	0	0
<b>Electric Power Installer/Repairer Accidental Deaths</b>				
	37	42	35	34
<b>Electric Power Installer/Repairer Employment (000)</b>				
	109	110	116	116
<b>Electric Power Line Installer/Repairer Fatality Rate</b>				
	33.9	38.2	30.2	29.3
<b>(2) Railroad Employee Deaths</b>				
	27	42	30	35
<b>Railroad Employee Homicides</b>				
	0	0	0	0
<b>Railroad Employee Accidental Deaths</b>				
	27	42	30	35
<b>Railroad Employment (000)</b>				
	229	237	238	239
<b>Railroad Fatality Rate</b>				
	11.8	17.7	12.6	14.6
<b>(1) Note that the number of deaths by electrocution as a result of contact with overhead power lines is much higher (e.g., 140 in 1992 , 115 in 1993 , 132 in 1994 , and 139 in 1995). However, most of the fatalities are workers, other than public utility workers, whose equipment accidentally came in contact with overhead power lines.</b>				
<b>(2) Railroad employee deaths do not include fatalities (1,000 - 1,200 each year) that are attributed to railroad-highway grade crossing accidents, non-railroad employees and trespassers killed in railroad yards, and on other railroad properties (tracks, etc.).</b>				
<b>SOURCES: Fatal Occupational Injuries by Industry, Event, or Exposure (1993-95) and Fatal Occupational Injuries by Selected Occupation, with Employment, Rate, and Relative Standard Error (1993-95).</b>				
<b>Published by U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics - Census of Fatal Occupational Industries</b>				

**ATTACHMENT B**

# Slain driver had just begun job

► His first night as a taxi driver, the Riverside man was shot to death.

By Lisa O'Neill  
The Press-Enterprise

Frank Charles Hardt's first night as a Yellow Cab driver turned out to be his last. Found shot to death in his cab with its lights on, engine running and doors open, the 54-year-old Riverside man was killed before he could finish his inaugural shift as a cabbie, police said.

Authorities found Hardt's body inside his cab on North Turill Avenue in San Bernardino about 1:45 a.m. Sunday. San Bernardino police Detective Steve Filson said Hardt had been inside his cab about three hours before he was found.

Carolyn Bryan, manager of the Cottonwood Mobile Home Park in Riverside where Hardt had lived since Feb. 16, said she worried about Hardt ever since he told her he was going to take a job as a taxi driver.

"My stomach turned right over," Bryan said. "The thought went through my head for crying out loud, don't get shot."

About 7:30 a.m. Sunday, Bryan found two detectives at her door who told her that Hardt had been killed.

"He was a very likable gentleman, very friendly," she said.

Hardt, who lived with a pair of dogs named Peg and Foxie, belonged to a motorcycle riders club and had lived in the Riverside mobile home park for only a month. He had previous addresses in Corona and Moreno Valley, police said, and had family in Washington and Wisconsin.

No suspects have been identified, but Filson said Hardt had received a call from someone in the northwest area of Riverside who needed a ride to San Bernardino. "The last the cab company knew, he was en route to another location," Filson said.

The detective declined to release further details in the case, including whether robbery appeared to be a motive. But he said there was no indication that Hardt knew his assailant.

Bob Chafn, general manager of Yellow Cab, declined to comment, citing the police.

# Shot cabby in battle for his life

By LAURA WILLIAMS

Daily News Staff Writer

A livery cab driver was shot in the head — then robbed of \$12 — early yesterday in Crown Heights.

Joseph Francois, 34, was rushed to Kings County Hospital, where he was listed in critical condition.

Francois — a Haitian immigrant who has lived here with his family about four years — was cruising the streets for a fare yesterday at 1:35 a.m. when a woman flagged him down at Kingston Ave. and Dean St., police said.

As he pulled over to pick her up, two men suddenly appeared and piled into the car instead of the woman. Police said that when the cabby refused to take them where they demanded to go, one of the men fired a single shot into his head. They then grabbed the money from Francois and fled.

Detectives from the 77th Precinct were investigating the shooting yesterday.

Neighbors described Francois as a quiet, hardworking family man who doesn't socialize much. He lives on the second floor of a red brick rowhouse in East Flatbush, on a block populated mostly by Caribbean immigrants, with his wife and children. Neighbors say the Francoises have four kids.

"He works hard, takes care of his kids and doesn't cause trouble for nobody," said neighbor Lloyd Hylton, 38. "It's hard enough to get a job out here.

You get one, work all those hours to try to feed your family, then something like this happens. It's a real shame."

Several cab drivers, many of whom are immigrants, have been shot on the job over the last two months.

The victims include:

■ Livery driver Wilkens Soto, 23, was fatally shot in the head in the South Bronx on Jan. 16. Soto, found slumped in the front seat of his Lincoln Town Car, left a widow who is pregnant with their first child.

■ Three days earlier, Juwei Chang, a 65-year-old medalion cab driver, was shot dead while sitting in his car at one of his regular rest stops on Manhattan's East Side. Chang, who moved to New York from Taiwan 30 years ago, left a widow and 12-year-old stepson.

■ On New Year's Eve, Senegalese cabby Alle Mbaye was working the night shift for the Harlem Cab Co. when 19-year-old passenger Frederick Washington allegedly killed him with a single bullet in the head. Mbaye had 13 children, and worked to support family here and back in Africa.

■ Queens livery driver Jose Avecillas, 49, was robbed of \$100 and shot in the ear by passengers on Manhattan's upper West Side on Dec. 16. The father of four survived.

Anyone with information regarding the Francois shooting should call the 77th Precinct Robbery Unit at (718) 735-0602. All calls will be confidential.

CHICAGO SUN-TIMES

CHICAGO, ILL.  
DAILY 501,115

FRIDAY  
MAR 28 1997

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# Man quizzed in slaying of 2 cabdrivers

BY PHILLIP J. O'CONNOR  
AND ERNEST TUCKER  
STAFF REPORTERS

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Detectives questioned a man Thursday in the West Side slayings of two cabdrivers who were shot in the head within two blocks of each other and four hours apart in apparent robberies.

Slain were Josef Eberhardt, 46, of the 6700 block of West 87th Street, Oak Lawn, an American United cabdriver and a father of two, and Artis Robinson, 57, of the 1100 block of North Menard, a part-time driver for Sure-Way Livery and a father of five.

Area 5 Detective Cmdr. Philip Cline said the suspect was arrested



**Artis Robinson** Josef Eberhardt  
Cabbies killed in apparent robberies



Thursday after a witness said he was one of two men the witness saw fleeing from Eberhardt's cab in the 1300 block of North Waller about 9:35 p.m. Wednesday.

The suspect also was being ques-

tioned in the slaying of Robinson, who was killed a block from his home, Cline said.

A police spokesman later said several people were being questioned.

Meanwhile, a coalition of community groups and churches held a vigil at Division and Menard to demand increased police protection and government help for the Austin neighborhood.

"We have known for some time that this area was full of drug activity," said Leola Spann, president of the Northwest Austin Council. "You think it's on the commercial strip, but it filters down into the community. Then people who are trying to make a living are getting

killed. And that's sad."

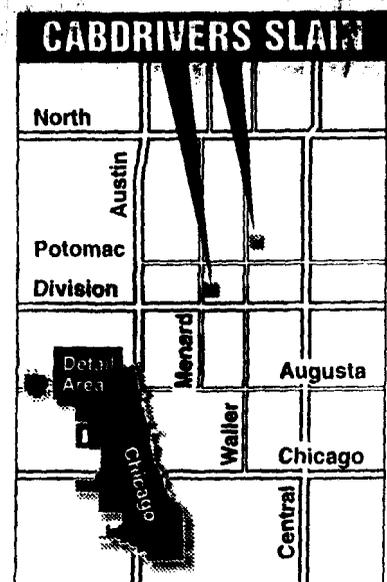
Standing a few hundred yards from where Robinson was slain, a fellow jitney driver, Mary Davis, said she spoke with Robinson on Wednesday.

"We both knew it's dangerous, but we got to make a living," said Davis, a Sure-Way Livery driver for seven years.

Ballistic tests will be done on bullets recovered at both sites to determine if the same handgun was used, Cline said.

He said it appeared both drivers had been robbed. They were shot in the head, apparently by a gunman in the rear seat, Cline said.

Eberhardt's cab did not have a bulletproof shield, police said.



SUN-TIMES

TIMES UNION  
ALBANY, NY  
SUNDAY 168,000

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# Injured cabbie stranded in cemetery

■ **Schenectady driver suffers minor stab wound after tussle with passenger**

BY LARA JAKES  
Staff writer

SCHENECTADY — City police said Saturday they are looking for a man in his mid-to-late 20s after a botched taxi robbery stranded a cabbie in Vale Cemetery, suffering from minor stab wounds.

Detective Douglas Mulligan gave this account of the overnight incident based on information reported to the police by the victim, Blue and White

Cab Co. driver William Van Patten:

Van Patten, 53, picked up his assailant at a Hess gas station on Brandywine Avenue shortly after 3 a.m. and pulled into the cemetery a few blocks away on his passenger's demand. The man put a knife to Van Patten's throat and demanded money.

Van Patten grabbed the knife with one hand and the microphone for the cab's two-way radio with his other hand and radioed for help. At the same time, he hit the accelerator.

After the cab hit the curb, both men jumped out of the car. A struggle for the knife ensued. Van Patten recovered the weapon, but the would-

be robber got back in the taxi and drove farther into the cemetery. Van Patten then walked to Casey's, a nearby bar at 98 McClellan St., and called police who arrived at the bar at 3:45 a.m.

Van Patten's injuries were minor, and he was treated at St. Clare's Hospital and released. The abandoned cab was found later in the morning in the cemetery, Mulligan said.

Police described the alleged attacker as between 5-foot-8 and 5-foot-10 inches tall and wearing a light brown or green jacket.

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## Man charged in assault on W. Columbia cab driver

■ A 34-year-old man was charged Sunday with assaulting a cab driver behind the West Columbia Police Department's headquarters.

Mark Gulbis, who lives on Carrolton Drive in West Columbia, became angry while riding in a cab, Police Chief Dennis Tyndall said. He did not know what caused the outburst, but he said Gulbis was "highly intoxicated."

Tyndall did not know the name of the driver, who works

for the Gamecock Cab Co.

The driver radioed a cab company dispatcher for help, Tyndall said. The dispatcher called police at 12:39 a.m.

A police officer found Gulbis had the driver in a choke hold inside the cab, Tyndall said. Gulbis was charged with simple assault.

The incident occurred on Augusta Street behind police headquarters on Center Street.

# Cabbie's final moments heard by dispatcher

## Killer escapes as drivers mourn

By JOAN TREADWAY  
Staff writer

Alvin Marchand kept his wits about him and his cab radio on.

A United Cab dispatcher then was able to eavesdrop early Thursday on one of the more chilling radio conversations ever to crackle across the New Orleans night: a brother cabbie, vic-

tim of a holdup, pleading for his life.

It almost worked. The dispatcher knew Marchand was headed somewhere on America Street in eastern New Orleans and spread the word.

Police and a posse of drivers converged on the area, but too late.

Marchand, 41, was found shot in the head about 12:30 a.m. and

died at the scene: an open field near a Sisters of the Holy Family convent in the 6900 block of Chef Menteur Highway.

Police said they were working some leads, but as of Thursday evening had not identified a suspect.

At the cab stands, curb sides and coffee shops where they congregate, shaken drivers Thursday spoke of Marchand with affection

See CABBIE, A-10



A memorial wreath in memory of United Cab driver Alvin Marchand, 41, hangs above a door at the Polymnia Street cab headquarters Thursday.  
STAFF PHOTO BY JENNIFER ZDON

# Cabbie: Death shocks fearful drivers

From Page 1

and of their work with fear.

Around United's Polymnia Street headquarters, Marchand was known by two nicknames: "Captain Smurf," because he was short and bald like the cartoon character, and "Steroid," because he worked out a lot at the Elmwood Fitness Center.

He also was known for his generosity of spirit. He was "someone who would give you the shirt off his back," according to a fellow driver who had known Mar-

A graduate of Hahnville High School who attended Louisiana State University, Marchand had worked at Ray Brandt Nissan for several years before joining United in 1989. He worked second jobs at Boomtown Casino in Gretna and Jubilee Casino in Waveland, Miss.

He was single, had a boxer dog named Bosco and lived in a Metairie apartment, said Marchand's friend, a fellow cab driver, who asked that his name not be published.

The two of them were in the habit of getting together for coffee in the French Quarter in the early morning.

It was with a sense of mounting dread that the friend, shortly after starting his shift early Thursday, overheard the dispatcher talking on the radio about a terrible development a couple of hours earlier.

Hearing Marchand's name, he picked up his radio and demanded details from the dispatcher: "I asked, 'What happened?' He said, 'He got killed.'"

It was not the friend's first experience of the link between death and cab driving.

For a while he had worked nights as a dispatcher, until the time he dispatched a driver to his death.

"I sent him to Hollygrove Street and about two hours later, the police called and told me they had found him shot, half in and half out of his cab," he said. He said he realizes that there is no way a dispatcher can foresee such tragedies, "but how can you not feel bad?"

Patrick Murphy, assistant manager of United, said about seven United cab drivers had been shot to death while working in the past three years. For protection, some carry guns while others have installed bullet-proof plastic shields between the front and back seats of their taxis, he said.

Mario Greco, 57, of New Orleans, who has been a United driver for more than 30 years, said he has both a gun and a shield. He knew Marchand as "a good man and a good driver who loved his work." He didn't know if Marchand carried a gun, but his cab had no shield, Greco said.

Of course neither measure is foolproof. A customer can always attack from the side or front windows, said Greco, whose daughter, 35, also drives for United.

Greco said his daughter likes the job as much as he does but did not deny he worries about her safety.

He offers her tips, born of his long experience: "If a customer looks bad, don't pick him up." One way of judging, he said, "is if someone walks like he's nervous — he's no good."

But even the shrewdest people-reading skills may be no match for the violence that lurks in the night: "We're not safe," Greco said. "We do the best we can."

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2 teens  
FRONT PAGE  
booked in  
cabbie's  
murder

4143

By WALT PHILBIN  
Staff writer

Two New Orleans teen-agers were arrested Tuesday and accused of robbing a United cabdriver, then firing five bullets into the back of his head.

Rondell Allen, 18, 1229 Lesseps St., and Wilbert Coleman, 17, 4300 America St., were picked up early Tuesday as they walked in the 1100 block of Lesseps.

They were booked with first-degree murder in the death of United Cab driver Alvin Marchand.

Marchand, 41, was found shot in the head Thursday about 12:30 a.m. in a field near the Sisters of the Holy Family convent in the 6900 block of Chef Menteur Highway. His cab was found a short distance away at America and Warfield streets.

See CABBIE, A-10

# Cabbie: Had been dispatched to suspect's home before death

From Page 1

Police said Marchand was dispatched to Allen's home, where he picked up both teen-agers shortly before the slaying. The two said they wanted to go to an address on America Street, police said.

When they approached their destination, the teen-agers demanded Marchand's money at gunpoint and ordered him to pull over at America and Warfield, less than a block from Coleman's grandmother's home.

Marchand, switching on his two-way radio with a foot pedal he had installed, was able to tell the United dispatcher he was being robbed, officers said.

"We don't know whether they heard him telling his dispatcher he was being robbed and that's why they killed him or what," an officer said.

Allen and Coleman marched the cabdriver through a hole in a fence and about 25 feet into the field. Then they shot him five times in the head, officers said.

Detectives got a tip early on implicating Allen. With confirmation that the cabdriver's last fare was picked up at Allen's address, they felt they had their man, officers said.

Police said they didn't have enough evidence to arrest Allen until they identified Coleman as an accomplice in the robbery. Coleman gave a statement Monday night implicating Allen as the triggerman, police sources said.

Coleman until recently lived with his grandmother, Bertha Mackey, near where the cabdriver was killed, police said. Mackey said Coleman moved in with Allen about a month ago.

Marchand's brother-in-law, Bill Caldwell, said "a quick arrest like this by New Orleans police has brought us relief and will help the wound healing process for the family."

Patrick Murphy, assistant manager for United Cab, also praised police, saying he is glad "the men who did this are off the street, not able to shoot other cabdrivers in the head."

Allen had been wanted on an attempted carjacking charge since August. In addition to that charge, he was booked with four counts of aggravated assault, one count of simple battery and criminal damage.

He is accused of flagging down a vehicle Aug. 29 at Dwyer Boulevard and Mayo Road. When the driver refused to surrender her keys, Allen pointed a gun at her two children, she told police. The woman was able to escape with the children and later showed police where Allen lived.

A warrant was issued, but Allen could not be found, officers said.

Mackey said she and Coleman's other grandmother raised him.

"He may have had feelings that his parents had abandoned him," Mackey said, "but his other grandmother and I were taking care of him."

She said Coleman had minor brushes with the law over the years, however. "He just didn't want to listen," she said.

MAR 8 1997

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# Veteran taxi driver shot, left to die

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## Police say robbery apparent motive behind shooting death

By Adam Lynn  
Staff writer

A Spokane taxi driver was shot and left to die in his cab on the city's North Side, police said Friday. The killer is on the loose.

The 47-year-old man was killed late Thursday near the intersection of Standard and Hill 'N' Dale during an apparent robbery, police said.

A nearby resident called police about 11:45 p.m. after hearing gunshots.

Officers found the driver dead, slumped inside his Lilac City cab, said Dick Cottam, police spokesman.

A witness told police she saw two or three young white

men running from the scene, Lt. Jerry Oien said.

The men were all about 18 and wearing "long athletic-type jackets," Oien said.

Police did not identify the victim Friday, saying his relatives had not been notified.

An autopsy is scheduled for Monday.

Howard Anstine, manager of Spokane's taxi dispatch



center, said the victim had driven cabs in the area for nearly 20 years and was well-liked by his colleagues.

"He was a veteran driver, very knowledgeable about what was going on out there," he said. "He generally worked the night shift."

The driver picked up a fare at The Onion restaurant and lounge on North Division shortly before he was killed, Anstine said.

Oien said detectives interviewed Onion employees but got no leads.

Anstine described the murder as an anomaly.

"I've worked in the taxi business here for 30 years, and this is only the second fatality," he said.

Driver Bruce Orchard was shot dead in a vacant lot in the Spokane Valley on May 1, 1993. The killer then set the taxi on fire.

Jerome Honton was later sentenced to life in prison after being convicted of the murder.



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**BURRELLE'S**

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# 4 drivers robbed, cabs taken

• All incidents have happened since Sunday, and police suspect one man is the culprit.

By JOSEPH BARRIOS  
Citizen Staff Writer

Police are looking for a man suspected of robbing four Tucson cab drivers since Sunday and driving away with their taxis.

The cab-jacker might be armed with a handgun taken from one of his victims, police warned.

Russell Charlton, a Tucson police officer, said detectives think the same man committed the robberies.

"It's either him, or somebody with the same idea in mind," Charlton said yesterday.

In each instance, the robber pretended to be a customer and threatened the drivers with a knife once inside their cabs, police said. He demanded money, ordered the drivers out and drove away in the cabs.

None of the drivers has been injured.

Two Yellow Cab Co. cabs, an Allstate Cab Co. Inc. taxi and a cab from an unidentified company have been stolen since Sunday, a police report stated.

Each cab was found abandoned the same day it was taken. No information was available on where the cabs were found.

David Baker, a manager with Courier Cab Co., advised cabbies to remain calm.

"I really think that the common thread is that all the drivers have been cooperative with the thief," Baker said.

"Think about cooperating with the thief," he said. "Try to ID the individual and protect your own safety."

Charlton urged cab drivers to be especially careful in "those early-morning hours," but added, "I don't think they'd find it (that advice) very helpful.

"When you're a cab driver, your job is to pick up total strangers in strange places."

A cab was stolen at 7:23 a.m. Monday from an unidentified company's driver who picked up a man along West Congress Street and drove him to East Lester Street and North Fremont Avenue, where he pulled a knife and took the driver's wallet and the cab, police said.

Also, a Yellow Cab was stolen at 2:24 p.m. Monday when the driver picked up a man near East Broadway and South Cherry Avenue.

As the Yellow Cab approached South Palomas Avenue and West Alameda Street, near West Pennington Street and South Grande Avenue, the man put a knife to the driver's throat and told him not to move.

The robber told the driver to get out and drove off. The cab-jacker is described as Hispanic or white, about 30 years old, with dark brown or black hair. He is about 5 foot 7 inches tall and weighs about 150 pounds. The man may have worn a gray suit jacket.

The first cab-jacking occurred Sunday at 6:45 a.m., when a Yellow Cab driver picked up a man at the downtown Greyhound bus station and drove him to North Ninth Avenue and East Fourth Street, police said.

Once there, the man put a long knife to the driver's throat and demanded money, police said.

The robber became angry because the driver had little cash and took the cab, the report stated.

The second cab-jacking occurred about 7:40 a.m. Sunday, when an Allstate Cab driver picked up a man near the 1000 block of West Congress Street. The man implied he had a knife and forced the driver out of the cab, the report stated.

The robber also took a gun carried by the Allstate cabby, the report stated.

With the possibility the robber has a handgun, cab drivers need to be extra cautious, Baker said.

Baker said his cab drivers are considered independent contractors and are not advised to keep a gun in the car. But he said drivers are not frisked, and their cabs are not searched.

Baker said drivers are told to refuse any customer they suspect has a weapon.

Anyone with information in the robberies is asked to call 911 or 88-CRIME.

## ARIZONA DAILY STAR

TUCSON, AZ  
DAILY 98,050

SATURDAY  
JAN 25 1997

**BURRELLE'S**

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### Taxi thief still busy, takes his 10th cab

★TUCSON — Tucson's taxi thief struck four times in the past two days, stealing his 10th cab since Jan. 17.

The knife-wielding bandit stole two cabs Thursday, at 11:30 p.m., and two yesterday, at 5:40 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. The areas ranging from North Oracle Road and West Lester Street to 25 W. St. Mary's Road, according to Tucson Police Department.

In each robbery, small amounts of money were taken from drivers, who were then forced out of their cabs at knife-point. The stolen cabs were recovered short distances away from the robbery sites.

"We're going to catch his guy sooner or later," said Sgt. Bob Baker, robbery arson detail, said yesterday.

The robber is described as an Anglo or Hispanic, about 30 to 35 years old, about 5 feet 10 inches tall, with a medium build.

Police believe the taxi robber may be a drug addict who needs to support his habit.

LAS VEGAS  
REVIEW-JOURNAL

LAS VEGAS, NV  
DAILY 142,183

FRIDAY  
JAN 17 1997

BURRELLE'S

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# Attack rattles cabbies

4143  
□ A taxi driver survives a near-fatal assault when he 'hits the gas' and rams his vehicle into a light pole.

By Tanya Flanagan  
Review-Journal

In a town that never sleeps, the most dangerous after-hours job can be driving a taxi.

Bill Mills made that discovery about 2 a.m. Tuesday when he was nearly killed by a customer he picked up at a Strip hotel.

Within minutes of starting Tuesday morning's trip, a knife-wielding bandit was cutting the 54-year-old's hands, stabbing him in the chest and slashing his face.

The assailant demanded his wallet while holding the knife to his throat, Mills recalled Thursday, only hours after being released from University Medical Center after receiving numerous stitches.

"As I reached for the wallet I hit the gas and rammed into a light pole" in the 4300 block of Koval Lane near the Strip, Mills said.

"I believe I saved my life," Mills said.

He said doctors inserted a tube into his lung to keep it from collapsing.

His attacker ran from the cab after it slammed into the pole. He remained at large Thursday evening, said Lt. Larry Spinosa of the Metropolitan Police Department Robbery Division.

The attack has cabdrivers with the nine local companies shaken and concerned for their safety.

Ⓢ Please see TAXI/6B

## Taxi

From 1B Ⓢ

A Whittlesea Blue Cab company driver, who asked not to be identified, said the two-way radios and hazard alert devices inside taxis work, but surveillance cameras in cars could be more helpful.

From August to December, 43 cabdrivers were robbed in the Las Vegas area, Spinosa said. An estimated 107 incidents were recorded last year, he said.

Exact numbers were only available for the four-month period, Spinosa said.

All but two of these robberies occurred at night, and 23 percent resulted in injury to the cabdriver, Spinosa said.

Safety is a concern, Mills said, but his bout with death has not made him want to give up his job.

"It doesn't change my mind about driving a cab. I just think I was in the wrong place at the wrong time," Mills said. "I could say I could have did this or did that, but if a guy is angry he is going to do whatever he is going to do."

The Taxi Cab Authority for Nevada teaches safety guidelines that all drivers in Clark County are required to learn before they take a cab assignment, said Bill Shranko, director of operations for Checker Cab Company, which employs Mills.

Shranko said the company is in full compliance with those regulations and continually works to improve safety conditions.

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**“It doesn't change my mind about driving a cab. I just think I was in the wrong place at the wrong time.”**

**Bill Mills**  
LV cabdriver

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Shranko is familiar with the idea of putting glass or mesh partitions inside the cabs to increase safety. But drivers don't want the partitions, he said.

"They don't want their fun taken away. They don't want visitors to Las Vegas to feel unwelcome, and if you have partitions in the cab you feel that you are held hostage," Shranko said.

Cages or mesh are used in other cities, such as New York and Chicago, and are safety methods generally supported by Las Vegas police, Spinosa said.

Spinosa said the best defense is to give robbers whatever they want. Shranko said that's his company's policy.

For Mills, that wasn't enough, but he said he is trying not to dwell on the incident by replaying it in his head.

"I know it was only seconds but it seemed like 15 minutes and now everything is hind sight," Mills said. "I have a lot of healing to do and I am just trying to recover."

# Hudson cabjacker pleads guilty

By Gilbert D. Martinez  
Journal staff writer

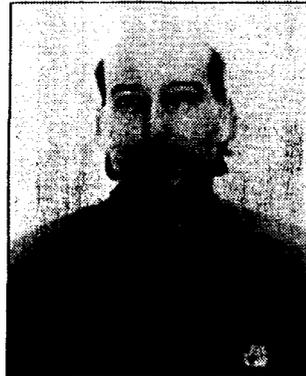
4143  
A Hoboken man who terrorized Hudson County cabbies by robbing them with a variety of weapons, including a hypodermic needle he said contained AIDS-tainted blood, has pleaded guilty to 13 counts of carjacking.

Victor DeGross, 36, of Clinton Street, faces 45 years in state prison with no chance of parole for 15 years when he is sentenced on May 2 by Superior Court Judge Frances L. Antonin.

His 21-page indictment reads like a sports box score: 81 total counts, including 13 carjackings, 13 armed robberies, 30 weapons offenses, 13 counts of threats to kill or harm the cabbie, and two counts of drug possession and one count of aggravated assault.

As part of the plea bargain, DeGross on Friday admitted only to the carjackings and the 68 remaining charges were dropped. Even if prosecutors proceeded with a trial, most of the charges against DeGross would have merged together, meaning much of the jail time would have run concurrently to each other, Assistant Hudson County Prosecutor Herbert E. Walker II said.

During the case, DeGross terrified local



VICTOR DeGROSS

the drivers out of the car, take their money and then drive off with their cabs, ditching the vehicles a few blocks away.

In one case, he was charged with slashing the throat of a cabbie who resisted his demands.

A few cabbies who were victimized by DeGross quit their jobs because of his actions.

Of the 13 carjackings that happened between Oct. 23 and Nov. 15, 1995, seven happened in Jersey City,

taxi drivers, some of whom refused to pick up customers who fit his description. Cab companies had police sketches of DeGross pinned up in their garages while he remained at large.

DeGross would flag down cabs or call them to come get him before he would pull out a knife, gun or, in three cases, a hypodermic needle he said was filled with AIDS-tainted blood. He'd force

two in Harrison, two in Union City, and one each in Hoboken and Weehawken.

During a six-day stretch in November 1995, DeGross committed nine cabjackings — including two on Nov. 13, three on Nov. 14 and two more on Nov. 15, the day he was arrested.

His lawyer, John J. Bruno Jr. of Rutherford, said his client was tormented by a drug addiction so bad it forced him to commit the crimes.

"(Drug addiction) was the only reason for those crimes," Bruno said after the hearing. "He was crying for help."

Bruno said his client plans on enrolling in religion classes and drug education courses to overcome his habit.

The assistant prosecutor who handled the case said he had little sympathy for DeGross and his addiction.

"Victor DeGross is a calculating, shrewd, opportunistic parasite who intentionally preyed on the people in the community," Walker said. "Drugs do have a lot to do with some crimes out there, but I'm a lot less sympathetic when it comes to DeGross."

"The only guy who resisted him had his throat cut," Walker said, speculating that if the other victims had resisted, most of the violence would have occurred. "He was a real terror."

ANDERSON  
INDEPENDENT-MAIL

ANDERSON, SC  
DAILY 50,000

MONDAY  
MAR 3 1997

BURRELLE'S

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# Customers rob cabbies in separate incidents

4143  
By Christopher Davis  
Independent-Mail

Two Yellow Cab of Anderson drivers were robbed in separate incidents by customers that they picked up early Sunday morning. The incidents happened about twenty minutes apart, and authorities aren't sure if there's a link between them.

Driver Roy Gaines, 49, of Anderson pulled up to 1012 Elizabeth Street around 3 a.m. and picked up two men, an Anderson police department incident report stated.

One man got into the front of the car, and one got into the back. They told the driver to go to Colony Estates, but the front seat passenger asked him a short time later to turn around and go back to the initial location, the report said.

The man in the back then grabbed the driver by the throat and demanded money. The driver gave one of the men \$250, and the two fled, the report stated.

The second incident involved driver Neil Wheat, 23, of Anderson, who picked up a man in his mid-twenties at Shockley Ferry and River roads around

3:20 a.m., an Anderson County Sheriff's Office incident report stated.

The passenger told the driver he wanted to go to several different locations before pulling out what appeared to be a .357-caliber Magnum, demanded the \$200 the driver was carrying and told him to go to Georgia, the report said.

He told the driver to get on Interstate 85 North, asked him to pull off at Exit 14 and told him to let him out and then drive away, the report stated.

The driver drove to a nearby service station and telephoned the sheriff's office, the report said.

Neither driver was seriously injured, but Bill Calloway, a dispatcher and driver for Yellow Cab of Anderson, said both were shaken up.

Mr. Calloway said in his five years with the company, two drivers have never been robbed in one night. He said the company has instituted a "common sense" safety policy and will be working with city police to make the job safer.

He said the two drivers will be back on the job today.

JERSEY JOURNAL (HUDSON  
DISPATCH EDITION)

JERSEY CITY, NJ  
DAILY 30,584

THURSDAY  
FEB 13 1997

BURRELLE'S

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## WNY cops arrest newly freed convict

WEST NEW YORK — Minutes after being released from jail, a town man was thrown right back in after he robbed a cab driver, police said.

Eduardo Gutierrez, 25, was arrested shortly after 9 p.m. Monday night and was charged with robbery, police said.

Gutierrez had just been released from Bergen County jail in Hackensack when he called Mr. Taxi to pick him up. He handed the driver a \$20 and asked to be driven home to West New York, police explained.

Gutierrez asked to be dropped off on the corner of 52nd Street and Hudson Avenue, but before getting out, Gutierrez attacked the cabbie, police said. He put his hands around his neck and demanded the driver give him back the \$20.

Frightened, the driver returned the money and Gutierrez ran around the corner to his home on 51st Street, police said. The driver radioed his dispatcher, who phoned police. Gutierrez was arrested inside his apartment.

It was not clear why Gutierrez was in the county jail.

— Melody Tanti

# HOUSTON CHRONICLE

HOUSTON, TX  
DAILY 551,563

THURSDAY  
FEB 6 1997

**BURRELLE'S**

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## Cabbie found shot to death in southeast area

By **JERRY URBAN**  
and **S.K. BARDWELL**  
Houston Chronicle

A 73-year-old cabdriver described by friends and family as a "good man" was found shot to death in his taxi in southeast Houston on Wednesday.

The body of Cisroe Taylor, who had more than 20 grandchildren, was discovered about 7 a.m. at apartments in the 3100 block of North MacGregor Way. He had

been shot at least once.

"I hope whoever committed this violent attack on my father is caught and brought to justice," said Kathy Taylor, one of Taylor's eight children. "He was a good man, honest and loving."

Taylor's last fare dispatched by Square Deal Cab Co. about midnight Tuesday was a regular rider with Taylor.

Police said dispatchers lost contact with Taylor shortly after that, and it was unclear whether he actually picked up the rider.

Residents near where Taylor's body was found reported hearing gunfire between midnight and 12:30 a.m. Wednesday.

Taylor was found with the driver's door open and one foot outside, as if he'd been getting out when he was shot, police said.

Investigators said it was unclear whether robbery was the motive. Taylor's log book was missing, and the microphone with which he communicated with dispatchers had been torn out and left on the ground.

A loaded gun was found on the

seat of the taxi. Police were unsure whether it was Taylor's and whether it had been fired.

Family members said Taylor had been a cabdriver for 35 years and had been working part-time since retiring several years ago.

"He was good to work with, and he was particular about whom he picked up," said Jewel Kennedy, a fellow cabdriver.

"Only him and God knows what happened."

Kennedy said she fears for her safety when driving.

"It makes the hair on your neck rise," she said, "especially after something like this happens."

John Jenkins, owner of Square Deal Cab, also described Taylor as a good man.

He said another Square Deal driver was killed on duty in 1990.

The last on-duty cabbie slain here was a Yellow Cab driver shot near Greenspoint Mall in December 1992.

Arrangements for Taylor were pending at Fondel Memorial Chapel, 4304 La Branch.

FRIDAY  
JAN 31 1997

**BURRELLE'S**

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# Cabbie killed on pre-dawn fare

## 67-year-old driver's slaying No. 6 in 2½ years

By CLIF LeBLANC  
and BOB STUART  
Staff Writers

4143

Deadly violence against local cab drivers had subsided for almost a year until Thursday, when a bullet claimed the sixth cabbie in 2½ years.

Paul Rabon, 67, a driver for Blue Ribbon Cab Co., was found about 6:10 a.m. slumped against the driver's door of cab No. 176 behind C.A. Johnson High School, police said. Next to his body lay a .25-caliber semiautomatic. The gun had not been fired.

Rabon became the fourth Blue Ribbon driver to die violently since 1994.

"He has guns registered to him, but we're still checking to see if that was one of them," Columbia police Maj. Charlie Clark said.

Detectives believe that Rabon was killed during a robbery. The cab company president said he thinks the driver was set up.

"It's just my feeling it was a setup from the way it went down," said Blue Ribbon president Joseph Fulton. "It happened on a dead-end street. Whoever got that call was destined to be robbed or killed."

A woman called about 5:30 a.m. and asked that a cab be sent to 2200 Dart St., which borders a practice field behind the school. Rabon's cab was about a half-mile away near Midland Shopping Center, police said.

The caller's voice was described as sounding like a young person's; other than that, police have little information on the woman. Fulton said the dispatcher described the call as normal.

Neighbors found Rabon after hearing a commotion. But police can't account for the

40 minutes from the time he was asked to pick up the fare. He did not talk again on the cab radio, Clark said.

Residents reported hearing the sounds of someone running, a car speeding away and several popping sounds, police said. There's no indication that Rabon was shot more than once.

An autopsy showed the bullet came from the passenger side of the taxi. The small-caliber bullet pierced his upper right chest, nicked his aorta and traveled through both lungs. Rabon died quickly from heavy hemorrhaging, said Richland County Coroner Frank Barron.

Fulton said Rabon's car did not have a bulletproof shield, which the city of Columbia requires if a driver requests it.

He said about 50 percent of Blue Ribbon's cabs have the shields. "We get complaints from passengers about the shields, and a lot of drivers don't care for them," he

### Cabbie slayings

*Blue Ribbon Cab driver Paul Rabon was killed Thursday morning in the sixth fatal attack on a Columbia taxi driver in 2½ years. The other victims:*

■ **March 1996:** Ivory Wilcox, Blue Ribbon. Derrick Gadson, 22, is awaiting trial on a murder charge.

■ **February 1996:** Elvis McDonald, Gamecock Cab. Felix Cheeseboro faces a murder charge; he also is charged in the slayings of Columbia barber Frank Kelly and a customer, Leon Poole.

■ **May 1995:** Ulysses Collins, Blue Ribbon. Gary Gresham is awaiting trial on a murder charge.

■ **October 1994:** Eugene Hunter, Original Orange Cab Co. Uganda Wilson was sentenced to life in prison, and Murray Wilson pleaded guilty and got 28 years.

■ **August 1994:** Edward Broadnax, Blue Ribbon. Kevin Bentley pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter and is serving 24 years.

Fulton described Rabon as lifelong cabbie, who had spent more than 40 years driving in the Columbia area. He had worked Blue Ribbon the past four years.

"It was his livelihood and he was good at it," Fulton said. "I was well-liked by his fellow drivers and company officials. This is devastating. We're like one big family and this affects us all."

**ABS**  
FROM PAGE B1

said.

The Columbia City Council passed the safety measure last year in response to a wave of shootings involving area cab drivers.

The last cabbie killed before Rabon was Ivory Wilcox, a Blue Ribbon driver shot March 9. Derrick Gadson, 22, is awaiting trial in that case.

JAN 12 1997

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## LAW & DISORDER

### Trenton cab driver robbed at knife point

A Trenton cabbie was robbed at knife point of more than \$150 yesterday by a man he thought was just another paying customer, police said.

David Durand, 35, of Lumberton Street, was flagged down by the unidentified thug and a woman at the corner of Calhoun and West State streets at about 5:22 p.m.

Both got into the car and asked to be dropped off at the corner of Chestnut and Walnut avenues, police said.

The women, however, asked to be let out at the corner of South Broad and Market streets.

She was described as a 5 foot black female with short curly hair, age between 30 and 35, weighing 130 pounds, police said.

The man, a 6 foot black male weighing about 175 pounds between the ages of 18 and 24, said he would pay for her fare, and told the cabbie to continue driving.

When they reached Chestnut street Durand said the thug, who was sitting in the back seat, pulled out a switch blade and put it to the cabbie's neck.

Durand reached into his pocket and handed the man \$150, but the thug then came around to the driver's side and demanded more.

"I know you got some money, I want it all," the knife-wielding thug reportedly said.

The cabbie then handed him a small brown change purse filled with various coins.

The thief, wearing a red hooded sweatshirt, a tan hooded coat and khaki pants, took the money and ran off down Thompson Alley.

FRIDAY  
APR 4 1997

**BURRELLE'S**

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### Man stabs cabdriver in neck and steals car

GREENFIELD — A 41-year-old cabdriver was stabbed in the neck and robbed of his cab early Thurs-



day, Saratoga County Sheriff deputies said.

Cabdriver Ronald L. Braman, who is recovering at Saratoga Hospital, told police he picked up the suspect in Sara-

toga Springs and headed toward Sodeman Road in Greenfield. The suspect, described as a 20-year-old man wearing a red coat, stabbed Braman with a "sharp object" at about 6:30 a.m. and fled with an unknown quantity of cash and the car, police said.

Braman remains in stable condition and the neck wound is not considered life-threatening, Sheriff James D. Bowen said.

State Police Trooper Richard Sehlmeier found the stolen cab at an unoccupied camp on Katham Road in the town of Day, Saratoga County.

CHICAGO TRIBUNE

CHICAGO, IL  
DAILY 691,283

THURSDAY  
FEB 13 1997

BURRELLE'S

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# Palatine police seek 2 in cabdriver's slashing

By Dionne Searcey  
TRIBUNE STAFF WRITER

The American Taxi driver was somewhat uneasy when his last two fares, a young couple without any luggage, climbed into his cab in Palatine, saying they were on their way to O'Hare International Airport for a Hawaiian vacation.

A few minutes and several blocks later, his worries were justified when one of his passengers, for no apparent reason, pulled out a knife and slashed his throat.

Wednesday, the 51-year-old driver was nursing his wound, a long gash across his neck held together by several stitches. He and Palatine police were wondering what prompted the attack in an area where such random violence is rare.

"There was no robbery, no asking for money," said the driver, who lives in Palatine but asked that his name not be disclosed. "I was a little bit suspicious, but not to the extent that I thought they would do this kind of thing."

The cab had not gone very far, and the driver did not have his meter running because the couple had asked to go to O'Hare, a trip for which American Taxi

charges a flat rate.

The attack has caused him to question whether he should continue driving a cab, a job ranked as the most dangerous in America in a 1996 study by the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health.

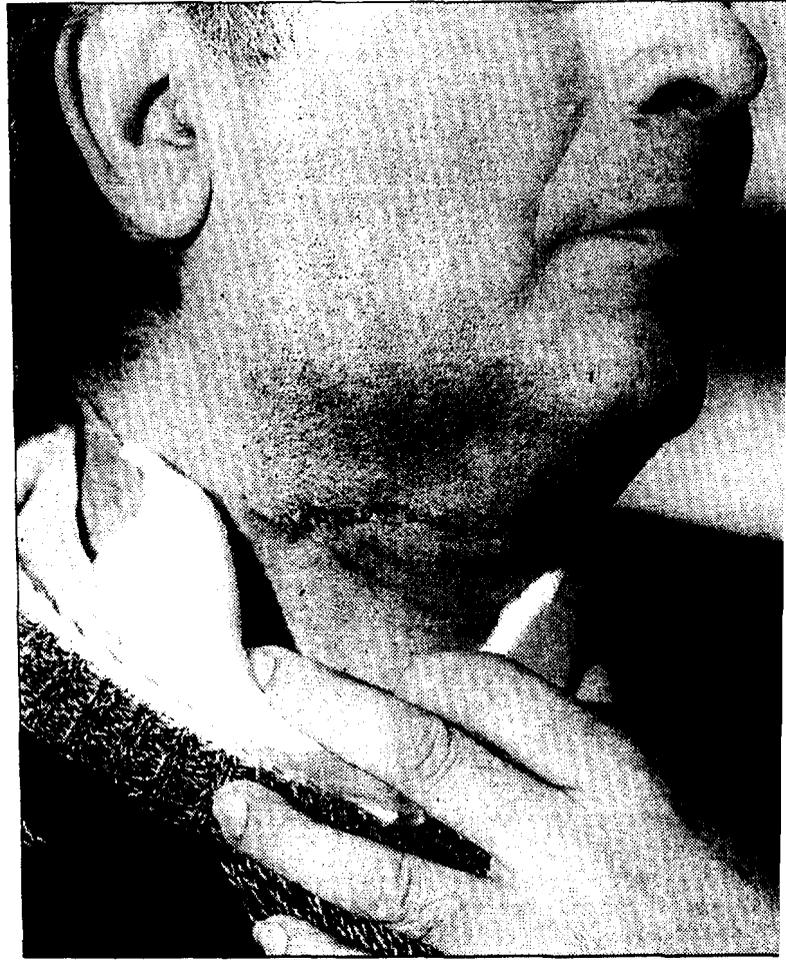
"My wife doesn't want it, but I don't think I can leave right away," said the driver, who has four children ages 12 to 19, all of whom are in school.

Police were searching for the driver's passengers. The man attacked the driver about 7:15 p.m. Tuesday at 1219 Prairiebrook Drive in Palatine, Police Cmdr. Jim Haider said.

The attack was the worst act of violence in the suburbs in more than three years for American Taxi, one of the biggest suburban taxi companies. American Taxi dispatches its 400 cabs to about 22,000 calls for suburban transportation each week, said Dan Coyne, a fleet manager. Dispatchers are based in Mt. Prospect.

On Oct. 3, 1993, American Taxi driver Jusuf Hasani was strangled while driving his taxi in Itasca. The attackers, Billy Porras and Eric Wright, pleaded guilty to murder and robbery.

Suburban cabdrivers' routes generally take them through



Tribune photo by George Thomp

An American Taxi driver from Palatine is recovering from a throat slash that a passenger inflicted for no apparent reason Tuesday night.

safe areas, Coyne said, so they tend to encounter little violence.

Also, because their trips are longer and more expensive, suburban cabbies often deal with

credit cards and have less cash on hand than city drivers do.

"In the suburbs you have most run-outs, which are people who don't pay," Coyne said.