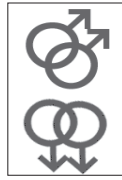


# THE VIKING LOGUE



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# Teen vandals wreak havoc on Christmas display



Logue photo by John Beyer

**ROCKIN' AROUND THE CHRISTMAS TREE.** Phillip OBrill repairs his rocking horse while working to reconstruct the Christmas decorations that were destroyed by vandals.

Jackie Wallentin  
News Editor

The holidays represent a happy time of year for many, but on Friday, Nov. 30, sophomore Dani OBrill's holiday cheer was dampened when teen vandals destroyed her family's holiday decorations and ran over her father's foot in the process.

According to Dani, her mother, Donna OBrill, was in the kitchen of their Hoffman Estates home around 11:30 p.m. when she heard noise outside.

"She opened the door and saw seven kids smashing our decorations, and they were all over the street," Dani said. "She called for my dad who was already in bed."

As Donna stepped outside, the vandals dropped what they were holding and ran to their vehicles to escape. Dani says her mother started to pick up the decorations when her father Phillip OBrill ran outside.

Phillip initially thought his wife was hurt.

"I saw the destruction at first, the nativity set missing and some of the other items ruined," Phillip said. "Then I saw my wife bending down and picking up things. I thought she was down."

Phillip says as he ran across his lawn to confront one carload of teens, he got his hand caught in the wiper blade of the driver's van.

"I told the kid not to leave, and the next thing I knew, he had his car in gear and was rolling," Phillip said. "I lost my footing, and as I was being dragged, I got my hand loose and I leaned to the right and he caught my left foot."

Phillip suffered scrapes and bruises on

the side of his body from being dragged the length of three houses, but no bones were broken.

Dani says her father did not catch the license plate numbers of the two vehicles, but he was able to give police a description. The car that ran over his foot was a blue two-tone van, and the other vehicle was a red four-door Hyundai.

According to Hoffman Estates Police Chief Clint Herdegen, the vandals are believed to be men in their teens, and if caught, the courts will determine the severity of their punishment.

"We have a few leads we are currently following up on," Herdegen said. "Our investigation is still pending."

In the days after the incident, neighbors and friends of the OBrills came over to help repair the decorations, worth approximately \$500.

"The outpouring from the community and parents from kids at Fremd and just all the different things that have happened in the last few days have been extremely enlightening," Phillip said. "It is absolutely amazing how people can come together."

In past years, the OBrills won a Winston neighborhood contest and placed in the top 10 in the Hoffman Estates Village contest for their decoration displays, which Phillip says took him three days and nights to complete this year.

Phillip says he does not know why someone would do this and hopes to talk to the teens if the police catch them.

"I understand that kids play pranks, but these kids were out of control," Phillip said. "I would like to know if they are man enough to talk face to face. If the police do catch them, my first question would be why."

# Fremd graduate receives a Nobel Peace Prize for global work

Helena Yu  
News Editor

When former vice president Al Gore received the Nobel Peace Prize earlier this week with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), 1968 Fremd graduate Bette Otto-Bliesner shared in the prize, serving as one of 16 lead authors of the Paleoclimate chapter of the IPCC's Fourth Assessment Report.

"I did not even know that we were nominated. I found out the morning it was announced when I got on Yahoo News," Otto-Bliesner said. "I was thrilled."

The Nobel Peace Prize is awarded yearly to those who have worked to benefit mankind. Previous winners include Nelson Mandela, Mother Theresa and Martin Luther King, Jr.

Gore's work on climate change concluded that the Earth is warming due to greenhouse gas emissions and human activity, requiring immediate action to deal with this planetary emergency. Otto-Bliesner's report assessed research on climate change since the publication of the last report in 2001.

"The part I wrote was trying to understand, from data and computer models, the climate change of the last million years," said Otto-Bliesner, adding that these models predict future climates based on past warm and cold periods, particularly when the sea level was higher than it

is today.

"My expertise is using computer models of the climate system to understand past climate change," she explained. "These models are used to project future climates and validate past climate change."

Otto-Bliesner collaborated with other lead authors to discuss their findings.

"All 11 chapters' lead authors met around the world in Trieste, Italy; Beijing, China; Christchurch, New Zealand; and Bergen, Norway," Otto-Bliesner said.

Otto-Bliesner says she never thought her work would receive an award.

"When you're in this kind of science, you feel it's important to tell the community what you know, but you never expect an award," she said.

Otto-Bliesner is a scientist at the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) in Boulder, Colo., and her work has been published in scientific periodicals.

"I have probably more than 50 research publications in science journals," Otto-Bliesner said. "I have also contributed to the National Academy of Sciences."

Prior to working at NCAR, she worked at the University of Wisconsin-Madison after receiving her Ph.D in

meteorology.

As an undergraduate student at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Otto-Bliesner says she was more interested in forecasting, but during graduate school, she began her work with climate change.

After taking a multitude of science classes at Fremd, Otto-Bliesner said she felt well-prepared for college.

"Fremd encouraged students to take advantage of their talent. The academic classes prepared us to go into science and math fields in college," she said. The fact that the IPCC received a Nobel Prize underscores the value of the report, according to Otto-Bliesner.

"The Nobel Peace Prize shows the importance of climate change of the past, present and future," Otto-Bliesner said. "The report provides evidence to the public, our government and scientists not involved in this field about the importance of pollution and what it means for the future of the earth."

Otto-Bliesner encourages students interested to pursue a similar career.

"We know a lot, but there's also a lot we don't know," Otto-Bliesner said.

**"When you're in this kind of science, you feel it's important to tell the community what you know, but you never expect an award."  
- 1968 Fremd graduate Bette Otto-Bliesner**