

Fairlee Youth Suicide

FAIRLEE — William Herbert Lange, 17, succumbed to a self-inflicted gunshot wound at 3:15 a.m., today, in the Franklin County Hospital in Greenfield, Mass.

The youth, a resident of Fairview Street Fairlee, was found slumped over the wheel after his car plunged over an embankment in the township of Deerfield, Mass.

Trooper Ralph Olfzewski of the Shelburne Falls, Mass., State Police Barracks told the Times-Argus that "police were on routine patrol duty about 2:17 a.m., when they spotted a Vermont registered car traveling at a high speed on Interstate 91."

The trooper reported the "cruiser pulled along side the car, which slowed to about 10 miles per hour. Then, the cruiser dropped back in line behind the car, which suddenly started to weave from side to side of the highway, then it plunged over a bank."

Olfzewski reported that police found the bleeding youth "with revolver in his hand slumped over the wheel."

Police rushed the youth to the hospital where he died at 3:15 a.m., result of a self-inflicted gunshot wound in the temple.

The youth was operating a car, owned by Lange Music Service of Fairlee, in care of his father, John F. V. Lange.

This is the second tragedy for the Lange family since Saturday, when their oldest son, John, 25, was injured in a three-car crash on Route 5 in Ely. He is listed in "critical" condition at Mary Hitchcock Hospital in Hanover, N. H. He sustained multiple fractures of both legs and possible internal injuries.

William Lange was born Aug. 25, 1950, the son of John and Irma (Campbell) Lange. The parents left for Greenfield, Mass., after being notified by state police of their son's death.

"Billy," as he was known to his friends, was a senior at Bradford Academy and between 6 and 8:30 last night had joined his classmates in preparing sculptures for the school's Winter Carnival this weekend. He was one of the candidates for Carnival King.

Besides his parents and brother, John, the youth is survived by two other brothers, Peter, a sophomore at Bradford Academy, and Hospital Corpsman James Lange, recently returned from Vietnam and now stationed at St. Albans Naval Hospital in New York.