

Fire kills woman who lived in terror

Associated Press

ARLINGTON — In the past six months, Velma Ewing had at last begun learning to live without fear. She had lived in terror since Sept. 30, 1982, when she watched a pair of youths stab her husband, 86, to death after they broke into the couple's Fort Worth home. A severe beating in the incident left her wheelchair-bound. She just had recovered from the trauma and was beginning to take an interest in life again when she and her daughter died as a result of a fire early Monday at her daughter's home, where she had lived since the attack, said Ewing's grandson, Irwin Coleman. Ewing, 82, was overcome by smoke as she sat in her wheelchair in a bedroom of the home, said Bill Fabian, a spokesman for the Tarrant County medical examiner. Ewing's daughter, Lenora Alice Coleman, 63, collapsed in a hallway while trying to rescue her mother. Coleman died Tuesday morning at Arlington Community Hospital, said hospital spokeswoman Darralyn Cummings. Coleman's husband, Johnnie Coleman, 67, also was taken to the hospital and treated for smoke inhalation.

He was in good condition Tuesday, Cummings said. The son-in-law, a retired engineer for Vought Corp. in Grand Prairie, had gone to remove the cars from the burning garage when the fire suddenly escalated, causing the surge of smoke that overcame the two women, officials said. Officials blame the fire on a faulty coffee maker.

Ewing's husband, Alexander was killed by a gang of youths who terrorized elderly residents in the area for three months in 1982, Fort Worth police said. In the weeks before Ewing's slaying, two other elderly people were robbed and beaten to death in their homes.

In October 1982, police charged brothers Larnard Earl Matthews, 15, and Bernard Earl Matthews, 16, in connection with Ewing's death.

The younger teen was convicted of burglary and aggravated robbery with bodily injury and sentenced to 35 years. The older brother also received 35-year sentence on a burglary conviction. Both are in prison, officials said.

But even after the arrest, Mrs. Ewing remained emotionally crippled by the attack, her grandson said.

Councilman's letter angers top Hispanics

Associated Press

DALLAS — Hispanic leaders have reacted angrily to a city councilman's claim that illegal aliens with no moral values are destroying Dallas neighborhoods.

Deputy Mayor Pro Tem Jim Hart, who heads an ad hoc committee on illegal aliens, made that statement in a letter he sent to lawmakers and congressmen from the Dallas area.

The letter asked the lawmakers to get involved with immigration control and invited them to visit neighborhoods which are being destroyed by the invasion of undocumented aliens.

Marcos Ronquillo, president of the Mexican-American Bar Association, called Hart's letter a "typical, monolithic, narrow-minded racist attack on a segment of our population that is defenseless and unable to respond to these attacks and whose only crime is to come to this country seeking a better life for themselves and their family."

Adelfa Callejo, chairwoman of the

Coalition of Hispanic Organizations, said Hart's statements were racist and offensive.

"I think that just exemplifies the feeling we've had about Dr. Hart's attitude," she said.

Hart's letter said the Citizens Committee on Immigration Control, which he created more than a year ago, includes Dallas Police Chief Billy Prince; Ron Chandler, Dallas district director of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service; a deputy police chief; and the executive vice president of the Dallas Citizens Council.

Chandler said that as many as 80,000 undocumented workers live in Dallas and perhaps as many as 150,000 in the Dallas-Fort Worth area.

He agreed with Hart's assessment of the problem, saying illegal immigration is totally out of control. He and Hart both said illegal aliens are taking jobs from U.S. citizens and burdening the nation's social welfare programs.

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