

Richard M. Giacopasi

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Honor Student, 17, Dies After Bat Beating by Teen

A Jackson Heights youth, savagely beaten with a baseball bat by another youth a week ago, died in Elmhurst City Hospital early Monday morning.

Police gave the following account:

On the Sunday morning of June 14 Richard M. Giacopasi, 17, and his brother, Robert 15, both of 37-52 83rd St., were playing baseball at 37th Ave. and 83rd St.

The brothers were approached by a 15-year-old youth who picked up a baseball bat and attacked both. Robert was released after treatment at Elmhurst City Hospital where he received 29 stitches. Richard was admitted and died in the hospital at 12:05 a.m. Monday.

The assailant was arrested and taken to Children's Court in Jamaica the next day, where he was ordered committed to Elmhurst City Hospital for observation.

The dead youth, the son of Albert and Margaret Giacopasi, was a graduate of Mater Christi High School, where he was class treasurer, a member of the National Honor Society, the track team, glee club, marine physical fitness team and the sophomore newspaper.

With a high school average of 95, he had won a Regents scholarship and an academic scholarship to Annapolis.

Mass will be offered at 9:15 a.m. Friday in St. Joan of Arc Catholic Church. Burial will be in Calvary Cemetery under the direction of the Conway Funeral Home, 82-19 Northern Blvd., Jackson Heights.

Richard is also survived by two other brothers, John and James.



RICHARD GIACOPASI

Savagely Beaten

Annapolis Was His Dream

By GEORGE ARZT

He worked hard in high school for his 95 average and won appointment to the Naval Academy.

Today—three days before reporting to Annapolis—17-year-old Richard Giacopasi was buried.

Richard, savagely beaten with a baseball bat by a 15-year-old June 14, died in Elmhurst General Hospital Monday.

A youth said to be his assailant was arrested shortly after the attack and was ordered committed to Elmhurst General for psychiatric observation. Police arrested another 15-year-old yesterday as an accomplice.

Albert Giacopasi, Richard's father, sat solidly yesterday in the living room of his apartment at 37-02 83d St. in the Jackson Heights section of Queens and described—from his son Robert's account—what happened that fatal Sunday evening.

Robert, 15, was also beaten in the attack.

The brothers were returning from a softball game with their equipment. Then just up the block from their home an argument started when an unidentified youth called Richard a name.

"Evidently, it was something nasty," said Giacopasi, "because Richard asked the boy what he said—to see if he heard it right."

The boy who shouted the insults had several youths around him, according to Giacopasi, a maintenance worker at Kennedy Airport.

"Another boy—Robert wasn't sure if it was the same who made the remarks—said, 'Give me that bat (Richard was holding) and I'll fight you,'" he said. "My son threw the bat to the ground and another boy picked up the bat

and threw it to the boy who wanted to fight."

"Suddenly the boy started hitting Richard—knocking him to the ground," he continued.

Robert, according to his father said he was too stunned to prevent the beating but shortly after went for the boy and was himself beaten over the head. The assailant also returned to beat Richard again.

A woman screamed and two men jumped from a passing car to stop the beating and the assailant fled.

"Thank God someone helped," said Giacopasi, "or I might have lost two sons."

The brothers were taken to the hospital where Robert was treated for cuts and a mild concussion and released.

Richard never recovered from a fractured skull.

Giacopasi sat numbly while his wife, Margaret, a public service nurse, and sons, Robert, John, 19, and James, 10, awaited his return to the funeral home yesterday.

He listed his son's accomplishments at Mater Christi HS in Astoria from which he was to have graduated a week ago. His son's diploma was presented to him today.

Richard was his school's class treasurer, a member of the National Honor Society, the track team, the glee club and he also wrote for the school newspaper.

"I'm not bitter," said Giacopasi, "but the important thing to see from all this is that it can happen. The people in this area are pretty damned aroused. The mothers are afraid for their children."

What are they afraid of?

"It's not the older kids—it's the 13 and 14 year olds who hang around the street corners, upset garbage cans, strip car aerials, snatch pocketbooks . . ."

Yesterday community members met with a City Hall aide and asked for more police protection.