

# The Detroit News

## Medical examiner: Spinal disease killed Andrew Anthos

Norman Sinclair / The Detroit News

**DETROIT** — For more than a month after Andrew Anthos died following a reported hate crime attack, the Wayne County Medical Examiner's Office listed his cause of death as "pending," never indicating a crime had been committed, Chief Investigator Albert Samuels said Thursday.

Samuels said the office followed normal procedure and performed an autopsy on Anthos immediately after his Feb. 23 death. The results, some of which took further analysis, could not conclusively pinpoint a cause of death until pathologists studied reports they obtained within the past week from the hospital where Anthos was treated for more than a week.

"Once we were able to obtain the records from the hospital and see reports by the doctors who treated him when he was alive, we were able to determine this week that this was not a case of homicide," Samuels said.

He said a gash on the back of Anthos' head was consistent with injury caused by a fall.

Wayne County Chief Medical Examiner Dr. Carl Schmidt said Anthos died of a degenerative condition known as spinal stenosis, an arthritic condition that compresses the spinal cord and nerves which could have made him fall.

Anthos' death received national attention as a hate crime. Anthos was found unconscious Feb. 13 in a snow bank outside his apartment building. Police did not become involved until several days later when he recovered consciousness. He told relatives and police he was attacked by a man who made a sexual slur before following him off a city bus.

Officers investigating the alleged attack apparently did not consult the Medical Examiner's Office, Samuels said. The case is now closed, said police spokesman James Tate.

In the aftermath of Anthos' death, state Sen. Hansen Clark, D-Detroit, said he would introduce legislation to amend the Ethnic Intimidation Act to include crimes motivated by a victim's sexual orientation or gender.

Clark said Thursday the new information only makes it more pressing that he widen his appeal to other reluctant victims to come forward.

"There are family members who know relatives who were victims who did not report attacks because they did not want to be outed," Hansen said. "We are going to encourage them to come out and report the crimes."

Dawn Wolfe of the Triangle Foundation said the organization is not satisfied with the medical examiner's findings and believes the cause of Anthos' death is still suspicious. She said the organization is standing with his family and still believes Anthos was a victim of a hate crime.

**She said the national Gay and Lesbian Task Force is offering a \$5,000 cash reward for information leading to the arrest and conviction of a suspect in the case.**

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