

# *Bruce on Bikers' Rights*

© Copyright 2009 Bruce Arnold (Bruce@LdrLongDistanceRider.com)

June 2009

## **OPEN LETTER TO LORA L. HUNT** *Reckless Killer of Motorcyclist Anita Zaffke*



22 May 2009

Lora L. Hunt  
6125 Peart Road  
Morris, IL 60450-9514  
Tel/Fax: 815-942-2022

Dear Ms. Hunt,

On the afternoon of 2 May 2009--the second day of "Motorcycle Awareness Month"--you made the deliberate decision to engage in the personal vanity of painting your fingernails rather than paying attention to your driving. In so doing, you knew or should have known that (just as if you were texting or talking on a cell phone) this deplorable discretionary distraction would transform the possibility of you being in an accident into a probability of causing one. In so doing, you exhibited a culpable disregard of the foreseeable consequences of your actions, and recklessly endangered the lives of all motorists who shared the road with you that day. And in so doing, you wantonly took the life of a helmeted, conspicuously clad, experienced and responsible motorcyclist, a loving wife and mother named Anita Zaffke:

<http://tinyurl.com/o4hcwv>

It's too bad Anita Zaffke didn't take the interstate that day. If she had, at least there'd be much less chance you could have plowed full speed into the rear of her Honda as she waited for a light to change. Instead she was on an undivided road, where according to NHTSA (DOT HS 810 606 Table 20), 90% of all motorcycle accidents occur. And why is that? Because those are the roads where motorists guilty of inattentive blindness resulting from discretionary distractions are most likely to commit a right-of-way violation ... like pulling out or turning left in front of us as they chat on their cell phones ... or weaving into our lane and hitting us head on as they tap out their text messages ... or ramming us at a red light while they paint their fingernails.

That doesn't change the facts, however, that Anita Zaffke had every right to be where she was, and that you had no right to hit her stopped motorcycle so hard that you knocked her two hundred feet through the air, causing her to suffer for more than an hour before succumbing to the mortal wounds inflicted by your total disregard for the lives of others.

You are responsible for taking a human life, Lora Hunt, because you made a conscious decision to engage in a distraction that you knew impaired your ability to drive. Yes, you were just as impaired as if you'd been driving under the influence of alcohol, if not more so. And had this been a DUI manslaughter, you'd probably be charged with a Class 2 Felony and sentenced to a jail term of 3 to 14 years. But "DWI" has yet to be redefined as "driving while impaired", in Illinois or elsewhere, so the charge you're more likely to face is reckless homicide, a Class 3

Felony punishable by only 2 to 5 years imprisonment. And even THAT charge has not been filed against you by the State's Attorneys ... yet.

Your untested but politically connected young lawyer, Ms. Ragan R. Freitag, only graduated from Mississippi College School of Law last year and passed her Illinois bar exam last October. But she has been quick to remind the masses through the media that "distracted driving is not illegal". That is true. And it is a sad commentary on the hypocrisy of our society that willfully endangering others by driving while impaired due to alcohol or drugs is a crime, but driving while being equally impaired by discretionary distractions is not. We will not allow Ms. Freitag's naive attempt at redirection, however, to obfuscate the real issue here. For even the staunchest Libertarians will agree that your freedom to swing a fist ends where someone else's right not to be hit begins. You crossed that line, Lora Hunt, when you took the life of Anita Zaffke. And no amount of remorse, staged or sincere, can undo the damage you have done.

For consciously deciding to engage in a discretionary distraction that led directly to the death of a responsible motorcyclist, you must be held accountable. That process begins, Lora Hunt, when you are scheduled to appear in Lake County Court at 9 a.m. Monday, June 8, to deal with your ticket for "failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident":

Lake County Courthouse and Administration Building  
18 North County Street  
Waukegan, Illinois 60085-4359  
[http://www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us/info/info\\_n18.htm](http://www.19thcircuitcourt.state.il.us/info/info_n18.htm)

RAIN OR SHINE, I HOPE THAT EVERY BIKER IN ILLINOIS RIDES TO MEET YOU THERE. I also hope that every rider reading this will join me in demanding that justice be done for Anita Zaffke, for her family, and for all American motorcyclists. And in closing, I hope that as a member of the First Christian Church of Morris IL, Lora Hunt, you realize how fortunate you are that the State of Illinois is not likely to apply the penalty for your crime prescribed in Leviticus 24(19-21):

*"If anyone injures his neighbor, whatever he has done must be done to him: fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth. As he has injured the other, so he is to be injured. Whoever kills an animal must make restitution, but whoever kills a man must be put to death."*

I, for one, wish they would. Then maybe, over time, more would change in these reports than just the names:

<http://tinyurl.com/fty-rowvs>

Speaking strictly for myself and no other individuals or organizations,

Bruce Arnold

Bruce@LdrLongDistanceRider.com  
Author and Publisher, LdrLongDistanceRider.com  
Co-Moderator, Bruce-n-RC's Biker Forum  
Mile Eater Gold Member, Iron Butt Association (IBA)  
Sustaining Member, Motorcycle Riders Foundation (MRF)  
2009 Chairman's Circle, American Motorcyclist Association (AMA)

cc:

Ragan R. Freitag, Attorney  
116 N. Chicago Street  
Suite 500  
Joliet, IL 60432  
Tel: 815-723-4400  
Fax: 815-723-4422

State's Attorneys Office  
18 N. County St.  
4th Floor  
Waukegan, IL 60085  
Tel: 847-377-3000  
[statesattorney@lakecountyil.gov](mailto:statesattorney@lakecountyil.gov)

Lisa Madigan  
Illinois Attorney General  
500 South Second Street  
Springfield, IL 62706  
Tel: 217-782-1090  
[http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/about/email\\_ag.jsp](http://www.illinoisattorneygeneral.gov/about/email_ag.jsp)

Pat Quinn, Governor  
Office of the Governor  
207 State House  
Springfield, IL 62706  
Tel: 217-782-0244  
<http://www.illinois.gov/GOV/contactthegovernor.cfm>

Ray LaHood, Secretary  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590  
Tel: 202-366-4000  
[Ray.LaHood@dot.gov](mailto:Ray.LaHood@dot.gov)