

SEFFNER

Flora House Keeps Dedicated Worker's Spirit Alive

SHE WAS KNOWN FOR COMPASSION

By KATHY STEELE
The Tampa Tribune

Flora Revesz will be remembered and cherished by family, friends and strangers she will never meet.

On Valentine's Day, the 31-year-old woman was killed in a Florida Avenue car accident that sparked renewed calls from Seminole Heights residents for safer intersections.

The target was chain-link fences, initially blamed by officials for blocking Revesz's view as she tried to turn left onto Florida from Powhatan Avenue.

"I hope they keep the pressure on," said Flora's father, Bill Revesz, who lives in Georgia. "I miss her, but if she can make things better for people in her death, God bless her."

On Saturday, Flora's family and friends gathered to honor her by dedicating Flora House. The adult group home on Stark Road in Seffner is managed by the Human Development Center, a private, non-profit agency that serves adults with developmental disabilities and behavioral disorders.

Flora's family, including her father; her mother, Diane; brother Trent; and 6-year-old niece Taytum, attended the ceremony.

Flora Revesz had worked for the agency for several years, and was on her way to work the night shift when the accident happened. She was a full-time student at Hillsborough Community College and planned to enroll at the University of South Florida to pursue a dream of becoming a forensic scientist.

"I'm so happy about this house," her mother said. "Flora was extremely dedicated to her men."

One in particular stood out: Tim Smith. Revesz was his case manager at the Human



Tribune photos by MICHAEL SPOONEYBARGER

Meredith Deming hugs Flora Revesz's fiance, Craig Tomlinson, during a ceremony dedicating Flora House, named for Revesz. Deming says her longtime friend "did the hard work a lot of us wouldn't do." Revesz worked for the agency that will manage Flora House.



Deming pauses at a plaque unveiled at the Flora House in her friend's memory. Many say a fence blocked Revesz's view of the road, leading to the accident that caused her death.

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It came to her naturally."*

DEBORAH SMITH
Longtime friend and co-worker

Development Center when Smith learned he had Lou Gehrig's disease. Though he moved on to other group homes and eventually to a hospice, Revesz stayed in touch.

She took him to Walt Disney World on her own time. Friends and co-workers said she fought battles for him to get better care until his death in 2003.

"He wasn't her client

any more. She just loved him," Diane Revesz said.

Flora Revesz's compassion and dedication are what friends remember most about her.

Longtime friend and co-worker Deborah Smith told Revesz to apply at the agency nearly 10 years ago.

"She loved social work. It came to her naturally," Smith said. "She was a very nurturing, very loving person."



Revesz
She was killed in a car accident on Florida Avenue.

Co-worker June Petralia, who suggested the group home bear Flora's name, said, "You could be in a bad mood and she'd perk you up."

Longtime friend Meredith Deming said, "She did the hard work a lot of us wouldn't do. The tragedy is that she was loved and useful, and is gone."

Deming said she wants to see chain-link fences removed from Florida Avenue.

"Legally allowed to and morally allowed shouldn't be two different things," Deming said. "It would seem to me some businesses would have a moral imperative to do something different."

Though the police report found Revesz had pulled in front of a northbound truck, her friends, family and some residents believe a chain-link fence blocked her view.

After the accident, code enforcement officials notified as many as 60 businesses on Florida and Nebraska avenues to remove sight obstructions.

R & J Auto Sales, which owns the car lot near where the accident happened, was told by code enforcement its fence was too new and had to be moved back from the roadway.

A hearing before the variance review board was to be heard this week.

Bill Revesz said it makes him angry, but he thinks his daughter would tell him something else.

"She'd tell me to just let it go," he said.

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