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Professor Meyer

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Mother of Three Killed

A Champaign women was killed when a large rock struck the front windshield of her car on I-74. The car crashed into a protective railing separating oncoming traffic on I-74. No other vehicles were involved in the crash and several motorists stopped to offer help. This is the second time in two years that a motorist was killed by falling debris. Last year, prominent Urbana lawyer Samuel T. Howe was killed when a can of gasoline was dropped from an overpass on Windsor Road onto Interstate 57, where he had been driving. Most recently, Emily Sawyer was killed when a rock the size of a football crashed through the front windshield of her 2008 Mitsubishi Lancer, splitting open her head. The rock landed in the back seat and was estimated to have weighed ten pounds.

Sawyer was a mother of 3 young girls and was a breast cancer survivor. Sawyer also had carried on a tradition of taking her 86-year-old mother to Holy Family Catholic Church in Danville every Saturday morning and then shopping and having lunch together on Marketplace Mall on the way back. Sawyer and her mother were enroute to their tradition when the accident occurred. Sawyer's mother, Celine Taylor, escaped with her life but was treated at Carle for a broken arm and multiple bruises. Just before

the 8 a.m. accident today, police received a cell phone report of young males throwing debris from the Prospect Avenue overpass onto Interstate 74. Sawyer was then taken to Carle Foundation Hospital where she was pronounced dead.

Her two sisters, Felicity Shrove and Donna Taylor, issued this statement at the hospital: "This was a senseless tragedy. Emily was a wonderful mother and caring daughter. Who would do this to a perfect stranger, just for kicks? It could have been any one of us or any of our kids. We hope that steps can be taken to prevent this from happening to anyone else." Anyone with information about the accident can call Champaign County Crime Stoppers at (217) 373-TIPS.