

Drowned man was loving son

Meaghan M. McDermott

Staff writer

Despite his profound physical and mental challenges, Michael Vyrvoss' family had no doubts that the young man was full of love. "He couldn't verbalize or really make decisions on his own, and needed a lot of help," said John Lotze of Brockport, Vyrvoss' uncle. "But he loved his parents and he loved his brothers: his older brother, Anthony, he adored and his younger brother, Colton, he adored him too." Vyrvoss, 20, of Kendall, died Monday in an apparent accidental drowning in the Erie Canal in Spencerport. He was a student at Monroe 2-Orleans Board of Cooperative Educational Services.

Ogden Police Chief Douglas Nordquist said BOCES staff noticed Vyrvoss was missing from their Slayton Place satellite facility and had initiated a search for him sometime around 1p.m.

Around the same time, Nordquist said, an 18-year-old walking along the Erie Canal noticed him floating in the water face-down. The passerby jumped in the water and carried Vyrvoss to the canal's bank, where BOCES staff pulled him from the water. Vyrvoss was taken to Unity Hospital, where he was pronounced dead around 1:58 p.m. Lotze said Vyrvoss's parents, Linda and Anthony Vyrvoss Sr., are grieving deeply for their son. "They are just salt-of-the-earth people, and this is a terrible tragedy," he said. "But they are living their faith that it was God's turn to take him,

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and that he is in a better place."

Nordquist said police have found no signs of foul play or criminal activity related to Vyrvoss' death.

Lotze said the family would not comment publicly on the circumstances

of the death. In a written statement, BOCES officials said a full internal investigation has been launched into the matter and that counseling will be made available to any student who may need assistance. Lotze said Vyrvoss' funeral services will be private, and that the family has launched an online fundraiser to help defray burial costs at giveforward.com. Any funds raised above the campaign's \$5,000 goal will be used to help provide care for Colton Vyrvoss, who also has significant special needs.

MCDERMOT@DemocratandChronicle.com twitter.com/meagmc

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