

Beer Lake car owner found

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The origin of the mud-coated station wagon pulled from Beer Lake last week is no longer a mystery.

OUPD Chief Samuel Lucido said a former student was located and admitted putting the car in the lake. No insurance claim was filed at the time of the incident, and investigators ruled out criminal fraud.

Lucido anticipates closing the case within the next few days.

According to Lt. Richard Tomczak, the car had been in the lake since 1993.

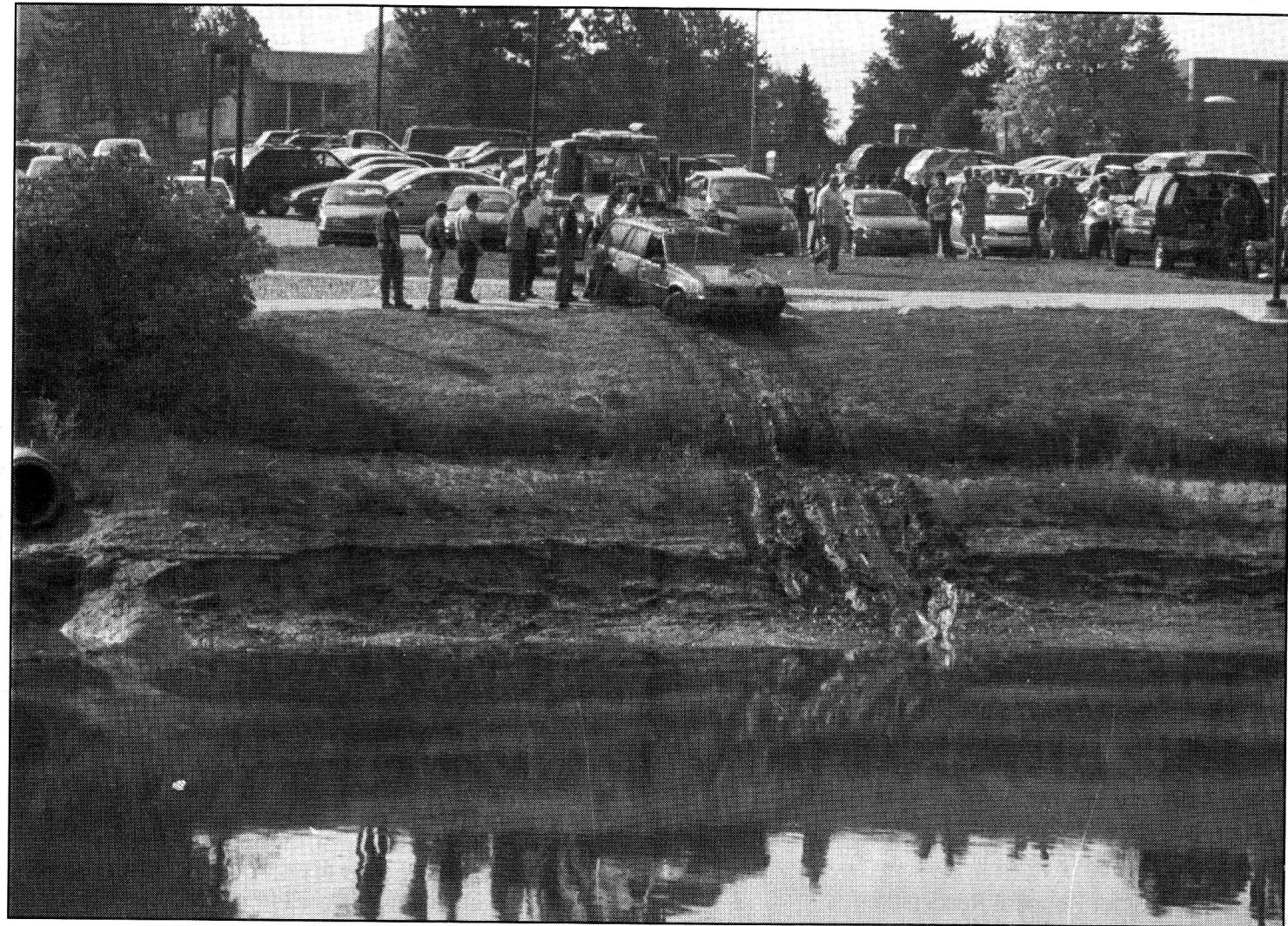
Dietz Smith and Bill Kukuk, two university groundskeepers, noticed the car's roof while making rounds at 7 a.m. last Thursday and immediately notified OUPD. Shortly after, the Oakland County Sheriff's Department and the Sheriff's Department Marine Dive Division arrived on campus.

According to Lucido, the vehicle was a mid-80s model GM station wagon with a 1994 license plate.

Lucido said a "very experienced" diver went out to investigate the vehicle. An extra-heavy duty tow truck from Byers Wrecker Service in Rochester pulled the car from the lake, a process Lucido said took nearly four hours.

Police found clothing, shoes, a blow dryer and curling iron, a suitcase and purse inside the vehicle.

Beer Lake, a storm water storage area, is roughly 13 feet deep. According to Simon Ren, university engineer and associate director of Facilities



A curious crowd gathers around the station wagon pulled from Beer Lake last Thursday. OUPD Lt. Richard Tomczak said the vehicle had been in the lake since 1993.

Heather Clement/The Oakland Post

Management, gradual drainage began in May so construction workers could complete bridge repairs. A total of seven feet of water have been drained, and the lake level was lowered three feet the day before the discovery.

Ren said the lake will be

almost entirely drained in the coming weeks so repair work on the dam on the east side can be completed.

The lake will be refilled only to 10 feet in an attempt to allow for more storm water storage and ease erosion problems.

Other changes are planned for

Beer Lake.

"We're going to reconstruct the lake to make it more stable," Ren said. "We're going to re-landscape it with taller plants that have deeper roots."

Several students and faculty lined Beer Lake's bridge to watch the car get towed, and

many developed their own theories of how it found its watery resting place.

"Maybe he tried to park it, but there were no spots," joked senior Colin Dolcetti in reference to OU's parking situation.