

House price school link

PARENTS are willing to pay more to live near better performing public schools, research shows.

ANU economist Dr Andrew Leigh and Harvard graduate Ian Davidoff compared house prices in school zones against the local high school's UAI scores.

It showed that the value of nearby homes rose as a school's performance did.

Killed by drug for his back ache

SUFFERING chronic back ache and about to embark on a trip to India, meditation-loving retiree Wayne Ritchie sought pain relief from a doctor.

But the drug he was prescribed — so strong it is normally administered in hospitals to terminally ill cancer patients — allegedly killed him 12 hours after he injected himself with it.

Prescribing GP Dr Garry Gow is now on trial for Mr Ritchie's manslaughter in what his District Court jury heard was "gross criminal negligence".

Dr Gow, a doctor for almost 30 years practising in Wollongong, allegedly gave Mr Ritchie a script for morphine tartrate on September 22, 2004, who collected five ampules of 120mg each and syringes from a chemist but "there was no directions on the prescription" on taking it. Crown prosecutor Priscilla Adey told the court.

Defence lawyer Liz Fullerton SC, said it was her client's case "the deceased himself played a part" in his death.

The trial continues.

Aussie injured by road bomb

AN Australian private contractor has been critically injured in Iraq by a roadside bomb.

The 34-year-old security guard from Melbourne received serious burns on 95 per cent of his body in an explosion 45km north of Baghdad on Thursday which killed two Iraqis.

Foreign Affairs Minister Alexander Downer said the unidentified Australian suffered significant wounds.

The respected judge, the dead professor and a speeding fine



Lent his car . . . Justice Einfeld and (inset) Professor Teresa Brennan

By VIVA GOLDNER

HE'S a respected former Federal Court judge and a top civil libertarian.

But Justice Marcus Richard Einfeld's appearance at a Sydney court yesterday seems to have raised more questions than answers.

Justice Einfeld was sworn into the witness box at Downing Centre Local Court to defend a speeding fine after his car was clocked at 60km/h in a 50km/h zone.

He told the court he had lent his silver Lexus to Professor Teresa Brennan, an "old friend" visiting from Florida.

The judge, who lives in Woollahra, said he had never been to Macpherson St, Mosman, where the alleged offence occurred on January 8.

Magistrate Ian Barnett accepted the judge's version. He was not cross-examined and the charge was found not to have been proved and was dismissed in just minutes.

In a letter to the court, Justice Einfeld said he was "unable to get more details" on exactly who had driven his car that day because the visiting Professor Brennan, "was unfortunately involved in a motor vehicle accident and died" after returning to the US.

The *Daily Telegraph* has confirmed the death of prominent Australian-born Florida professor Teresa Brennan in February 2003, who was killed while crossing a road.

Her death was three years before Justice Einfeld received the speeding ticket.

When contacted last night, Justice Einfeld said the woman who borrowed his car was in fact not Teresa Brennan.

"This was not the same person," he told *The Daily Telegraph*. "This was a totally different person."

In two subsequent

phone calls last night, Justice Einfeld explained he knew another "Professor Brennan" whose first name was Therese or Terese.

In a remarkable coincidence, he said the second woman had visited Australia in January this year and that she died in a car accident shortly after returning to the US.

He said he knew both women and attended Professor Teresa Brennan's funeral in 2003.

Justice Einfeld provided scant details of the second Professor Brennan.

Asked if he knew where she had lived, he said: "I'm afraid not. I know she lived in one of the states of America. She moved."

Justice Einfeld did not know the mystery woman's occupation, "except that she was in academia". Last night, he said he was driving to catch a flight and so could not elaborate on her life.

Justice Einfeld pleaded not guilty after his car was clocked at 60km/h in a 50km/h zone on the lower North Shore street.

The court yesterday heard he had earlier sent a statutory declaration stating he was not the driver but this document was not on the court file.

Magistrate Ian Barnett said it appeared the statutory declaration had not been acted on, or was "lost in the system".

"The matter is not proved," Mr Barnett said.

Under his personal letterhead, Justice Einfeld wrote that he was "happy to come to court to swear to these facts as required".

"[Professor Brennan] didn't tell me where or with whom she had been driving or that she had been photographed speeding before returning to the United States," he said.

The judge also said he "didn't know the area where [the offence] occurred at all".

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