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# Family suffers new loss as grandson, 6, dies

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By DENA BUNIS

On the day after her only grandson died, Waverly Roach could only wonder why so much tragedy had befallen her family in so short a time.

Almost five years after his mother, Denise, was killed by a Rochester policeman and his father, Louis, was shot by his grandfather, Clifford Roach, 6-year-old Louis J. Hawkins Jr. died yesterday at Strong Memorial Hospital.

Louis Jr. never knew how his parents died. He only knew they were in heaven, his grandmother said.

"I had legal custody of Louis. He didn't know anybody but me," Mrs. Roach said. The youngster, who she described as the "smartest kid you ever want to meet," called Mrs. Roach "Mommy" and his grandfather "Daddy."

"He was the last thing I had left of my daughter. He was my only grandchild," Mrs. Roach said.

Louis Jr.'s mother, Denise Hawkins, was killed Nov. 11, 1975, by a shot fired by Rochester Police Officer Michael Leach. Leach was intervening in a quarrel between Denise and her husband. A controversy arose after the shooting, but Leach was cleared by a grand jury of any wrongdoing.

Forty-nine days later, Roach shot his son-in-law Louis Hawkins to death during an argument over custody of Louis Jr.

Roach was indicted on a charge of first-degree manslaughter but pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of second-degree manslaughter. He was sentenced to 60 days in jail and 4 years,

10 months of probation.

Louis Jr., who was 17 months old when his mother died and 18 months old when his father died, got sick when he was 3.

"Louis got some type of virus. It was when the Russian flu was going around, and it damaged one of the muscles on the walls of his heart," Mrs. Roach said. The doctors told her he had myocarditis, congestive cardiomyopathy, she said, "a fancy name for fluid on the heart." She said an autopsy is planned to determine an exact cause of death.

The doctors said either her grandson would outgrow the problem or it would kill him, she said.

In June they told her that his condition wasn't improving and that he probably didn't have long to live.

"I think he knew. He told me he was going to be in heaven with his mommy and daddy and not to worry about him. His last request was that he wanted to be with his mommy and daddy," Mrs. Roach said, so she plans to see to it that the graves of her daughter, son-in-law and grandson are put next to each other.

Mrs. Roach knew that if her grandson survived his illness she would have to tell him the story of his parent's death eventually.

"I would almost have to. Pretty soon he'd been able to read and if there was something in the paper about it, he would see it and ask questions. I could never lie to him," Mrs. Roach said, but she dreaded having to tell her grandson about what happened.

"Maybe that's why God took him," she said.