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## MAN'S DEATH AT GRILL A HOMICIDE, CORONER SAYS

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NEWS 04D

**By Kevin Mayhood**

*Dispatch Staff Reporter*

An attorney representing the family of a man killed at a Far North Side restaurant is alleging that bouncers there used excessive force while scuffling with him.

Yesterday, the coroner labeled the death of Vincent Darling a homicide.

An autopsy showed that the 41-year-old Northwest Side man died from blunt trauma to his neck.

"If the truth is what we think -- that they used excessive force, causing the death of Vincent Darling -- he has a child and a mother and father and brothers and sisters; we want to see they be justly compensated," attorney **Keith Karr** said.

Darling's family hired Karr to investigate his death early Sunday at Dick Clark's American Bandstand Grill, 100 Hutchinson Ave.

The homicide ruling by Franklin County Coroner Brad Lewis means only that someone caused Darling's death; no one has been charged.

Lewis was awaiting results of blood-alcohol and toxicology tests on Darling.

The coroner declined to comment further. Police have asked him not to be more specific during their probe, he said.

Family members said earlier that they heard that Darling had argued with grill employees. The employees have not been identified.

Karr, however, said, "An argument did not break out.

"He simply came over to his girlfriend, leaned over and kissed her on the cheek and the American Bandstand bouncers attacked him from the rear. They threw him down several times, and he was killed."

Karr said he did not know why the bouncers would go after Darling.

"You wonder how they could react so violently when there was no argument," he said.

Darling's girlfriend, Donna Williams, has declined to comment on what she witnessed. The family referred all questions to Karr.

Jim Moore, president of the restaurant chain in Dallas, said company officials would not comment on the incident, except to say, "We have the deepest sympathy and concern for the Darling family."

Police were called to the grill at about 2 a.m. Sunday.

Darling was taken to Riverside Methodist Hospitals, where he died an hour later.

His brother, Freddie Darling II, said, "We want to make sure justice is done and somebody answers for it."

Darling has twice been charged with domestic violence in Franklin County. Both times, he was found guilty of a lesser charge of disorderly conduct.

He had no other criminal record here, according to court records.

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