

SUN CURRENT

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SPORTS

Blaze gets revenge on AV

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Mayoral challenger charged in road rage incident

Trial date set for Dec. 18 in case against Huston

ERICA CHRISTOFFER • SUN NEWSPAPERS

In the political waters of Apple Valley all seemed smooth sailing this year – that is until mayoral candidate Lance Huston ended up in some hot water.

Huston, the challenger in the Apple

Valley mayoral race, has been charged with fifth degree assault, disorderly conduct and careless driving related to an alleged incident of road rage that occurred Aug. 11 – nearly a month before he filed for candidacy.

Huston, 35, appeared at a pre-trial court hearing Wednesday, Oct. 25, at the Dakota County Western Service Center. However, no settlement was reached and a trial date was set for Monday, Dec. 18.

If convicted, Huston could face up to 90 days in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

Huston said he was unable to comment on the charges against him.

The victim in the case, Apple Valley resident Julie Folger, 32, said she didn't know Huston's name until she received notice about his pre-trial hearing. It was then that she put two-and-two together and realized he was the same man running for Apple Valley mayor.

"I don't really follow the politics," she said.

It was at that point she decided to go public with the case.

"I can't imagine wanting someone running in that kind of position doing that kind of thing," Folger said.

According to the incident report filed with the Burnsville Police Department, at about 7:15 a.m. Aug. 11, Folger was traveling north in the left lane of County Road 5 near Highland Drive in Burnsville.

A white Chevrolet SUV turned left onto County Road 5 before Folger's vehicle.

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Road rage

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Near 131st Street, the driver of the SUV, later identified as Huston, suddenly slammed on his breaks and came to a complete stop causing Folger to brake sharply and come to a stop behind his vehicle.

"He could have jeopardized his own life slamming on the breaks like that, let

alone mine and two other people," said Folger.

Two other vehicles traveling behind Folger also were forced to break and a motorcyclist was able to veer around the stopped cars, according to the report.

Folger told police she made an obscene gesture towards Huston's vehicle. He then got out, approached Folger's car and she rolled down her window to speak with him. Huston then allegedly spit in Folger's face. As the suspect walked back to his vehicle, Folger exited

her car and followed, asking why he spit on her. Huston, according to the report, grabbed Folger by both upper arms and pushed her back two or three times.

A witness driving the vehicle directly behind Folger's car stated that the suspect returned to his vehicle and drove away rapidly. She also wrote down his license plate number. The vehicle registration matched the one listed to Huston's 1999 white Chevrolet Blazer, according to Burnsville Police.

Folger said she was shaken and in

shock that someone would do that to her.

"The rage that was present among this individual scares me, and I feel that he is a threat to others in society," Folger wrote in the report.

The following day, Aug. 12, a photo lineup was created using Huston's drivers license photograph. Folger and one of the witnesses identified Huston as the suspect in separate viewings of the lineup, according to the report. The other witness was not sure and did not make a selection in the lineup.