

# Traffic-weary homeowners and Waze at war

By Steve Hendrix, Washington Post

When the traffic on Timothy Connor's quiet Maryland street suddenly jumped by several hundred cars an hour, he knew who was partly to blame: the disembodied female voice he could hear through the occasional open window saying, "Continue on Elm Avenue . . . ."

The marked detour around a months-long road repair was several blocks away. But plenty of drivers were finding a shortcut past Connor's Takoma Park house, slaloming around dog walkers and curbside basketball hoops, thanks to Waze and other navigation apps.

Connor borrowed a tactic he read about from the car wars of Southern California and other traffic-weary regions: He became a Waze impostor. Every rush hour, he went on the Google-owned social-media app and posted false reports of a wreck, speed trap or other blockage on his street, hoping to deflect some of the flow.

He continued his guerrilla counterattack for two weeks before the app booted him off, apparently detecting a saboteur in its ranks. That made Connor a casualty in the social-media skirmishes erupting across the country as neighborhoods try to contend with suddenly savvy drivers finding their way on routes that were once all but secret.

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