

' LORD , DON'T LET IT BE HER ,' ONE VICTIM'S HUSBAND SAYS - SUSPECT IS HELD IN EARLY-MORNING RANDOM SPREE

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Ophelia Fry kissed **her** husband good-bye about 6:10 a.m. Thursday and promised to call when she got to work at the Angel Land Day Care center on Detroit's west side.

"I'll call you when I'm in, honey," were the last words she spoke to **her** husband before being gunned down in a cluster of seemingly random shootings that also left another man dead and three others wounded.

The phone call was a routine that Fry and **her** 65-year-old husband, Bauford Carmichael, set up in the spring after a robber snatched **her** purse and broke three of **her** fingers as she exited **her** car at work.

By 6:40 Thursday, Carmichael started to worry about his 58-year-old wife, who worked only 10 minutes away.

He called **her** cell phone and **her** job. No answer.

By 6:45 a.m., Carmichael was dressed and on his way to the day care center.

He saw the flashing red and blue lights as he approached.

" **Lord , don't let it be her ,**" he thought to himself.

Fry, a cook, was one of five people shot - two fatally - during a 15-minute span about 6:30 a.m. Thursday in three chilling shootings, possibly involving two different gunmen, within two blocks.

A second victim, Arthur James Smith, 49, of Detroit was fatally shot in the head and chest while on his regular morning walk to buy a pack of cigarettes from a corner store.

Fry was struck in the chest before exiting **her** car.

Police said late Thursday that one man was in custody and he could **be** charged as soon as today with the killings. Officers also are no longer certain there were two gunmen after subsequent interviews and investigations, police said.

According to police, Fry was sitting in **her** parked car in front of the day care center, in the 8600 block of Linwood near Blaine, when she was killed. Minutes later, Smith was killed a block away on Linwood. A second man, Elton Ash, 51, was wounded in the same incident.

Within the next few minutes, two more men were shot and wounded in the 2400 block of Taylor,

not far from the first two shootings.

According to a neighbor, one of the men injured in that shooting was Dennis Anderson, 49, who reportedly was struck in the foot. Anderson was hit by a stray bullet while in his backyard, police said. James Lee Brown, 50, who was nearby, was struck in the right buttock.

Detroit police spokesman James Tate said the three wounded people were taken to Henry Ford Hospital with injuries that did not appear to **be** life-threatening. Two of the injured people have been released from the hospital.

Evelyn Wallace, 82, who lives in the downstairs unit of the two-flat on Taylor where Anderson lived, said she "heard shots about 6:30 a.m."

"I **don't** even look out; I hear shots all the time," Wallace said. Later, she said, she saw flashing lights, which turned out to **be** emergency vehicles.

Investigators said they didn't have a motive Thursday night. None of the victims appeared to have been robbed.

The federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, offered a \$10,000 reward for any information leading to the arrest and conviction of those responsible.

Police interviewed the three survivors, who provided descriptions of the gunmen.

The first gunman was described by police as a black man with a light complexion, standing 5 feet, 9 inches to 5-11 and weighing about 160 pounds. He reportedly was wearing a brown hooded sweatshirt and is believed to **be** in his mid-20s.

The suspected second gunman was described as a black man, 5-7 to 5-8, with a medium build and wearing a dark coat. He appeared to **be** in his early 20s, police said.

Carmichael lashed out between tears Thursday at the City of Detroit.

He said his wife, who was president of **her** block club and active with **her** neighborhood citizens band patrol, went to the local police precinct several times to complain about street light outages.

Carmichael said after the purse-snatching in March or April, he began driving his wife on **her** 10-minute commute to work and noticed a lot of drug dealing and prostitution along Linwood.

Recently, his wife started driving herself again. They agreed she would drive up and down the street, instead of parking, if she arrived at the center before doors opened.

"She really loved that job," Carmichael said. "She loved being with the children."

Mamie Robinson, 33, arrived at the child care center Thursday morning with **her** 6-year-old son, Silas Moses. She saw patrol cars and Fry's Impala parked in front of the day care center with the

driver's side window shot out.

"I still can't believe **it** ," Robinson said. "She was such a sweet, pleasant person. I **don't** know how anyone could have done this to **her** ."

Her son agreed.

"She was very nice," he said.

Arthur Smith, a U.S. Marine Corps veteran, husband and a father, loved to walk, according to his sister, Addie Delahoussaye.

Every morning he walked from his home at Euclid and Rosa Parks to nearby Bruno's Market to buy cigarettes.

The last thing he said to his wife, Willette Smith, was that he was off to the store. A short time later, he was gunned down at Blaine and Linwood.

"The neighborhood is dangerous, but he's lived here his whole life," his nephew, Jason Johnson, 24, said. "That was just a random thing."

Smith's family remembered him for his love of tinkering with cars and for how much he enjoyed his family.

Smith also had a daughter and three stepchildren. He received a medical discharge from the Marines in 1978, his sister said.

"He taught me to tie my shoes," his nephew said. "I can't believe **it** ."

SIDEBAR

HOW TO HELP

Anyone with information about the shootings is asked to call Detroit Police at 313-596-2260 or 800-773-2587 anytime.

Contact BEN SCHMITT at 313-223-4296 or bschmitt@freepress.com. Contact CECIL ANGEL at 313-223-4531 or cangel@freepress.com.

ILLUSTRATION: Drawing / Composite of suspect;Map KOFI MYLER Detroit Free Press;Photo

CAPTION:

A Detroit Police Department artist's sketch shows a rendering of a suspect tied to the Detroit shootings.

MANDI WRIGHT / Detroit Free Press

A.C. Towing employee Anthony Davis, 54, of Detroit cleans up glass Thursday from a car that was involved in a shooting on Linwood.

CUTLINE INFORMATION FROM ANNOTATED MAP ON PAGE 1A:

A shooting rampage about 6:30 a.m. Thursday in Detroit left two people dead and three others hurt. Police had a man in custody Thursday. He could face charges in the killings today.

1. 2400 block of Taylor Street: A

50-year-old man, James Lee

Brown, was struck in the right

buttock, and a 49-year-old man,

Dennis Anderson, was struck in the

left foot by a stray bullet.

2. 8700 block of Linwood Avenue:

Arthur Smith, a 49-year-old man,

was killed by a gunshot to the head

and chest. Another 51-year-old

man, Elton Ash, was shot in the

left elbow.

3. 8600 block of Linwood Avenue:

Ophelia Fry, a 58-year-old woman,

was shot and killed just outside of a

day care, by a gunshot to the chest.

Detroit Police Department

CAPTIONWRITER: Ophelia Fry, 58, was shot outside **her** workplace.

MEMO: SIDEBAR ATTACHED

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