

DETROIT: SELF-DEFENSE OR MURDER? FAMILIES REVISIT LAWN FIGHT

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He'd already fired one shot, killing 17-year-old Lorenzo King, who was grasping a baseball bat when medics arrived.

But before Douglas Walker leveled his shotgun at the second man allegedly trespassing on his lawn, witnesses said he told his two teenage sons to stand back.

Seconds later, the other man, 37-year-old Drake Jones, lay bleeding on Walker's lawn.

Court and police records say this is what happened to lead to Walker's arraignment Saturday on charges of first-degree murder, attempted murder and being a habitual offender.

His last conviction was in 1978 for possession of heroin, according to reports filed in Detroit's 36th District Court.

Walker's girlfriend says the April 24 shooting was in **self-defense**, that King was about to smash one of their sons in the skull with the bat.

Yet King's family says the teen was friendly and apologetic after being accused of cutting across Walker's lawn. If he had a bat, his mother said, it was simply for protection.

Welcome to the two sides behind the story of last week's lawn shooting in Detroit.

"It was **self-defense**," said Williema Johnson, 33, Walker's girlfriend. "Lorenzo had his bat up and was about to hit my 16-year-old in the back of the head."

Before he could, Johnson said, Walker fired the first blast. But King's parents said their son wasn't violent.

"My son didn't have a feud with those people," said Franz Turner, King's father. "My son just got caught up in it."

All parties agree on this much: Walker's 16-year-old son, Lamar Virgin, confronted King about allegedly walking across his yard on Sheridan. Lamar accused King of eyeing Walker's truck; someone had tried to steal it in January.

King denied cutting through the yard and said he'd instead walked through a vacant lot next to Walker's home. An argument began and 37-year-old Drake Jones, who lives a few houses away from Walker, arrived on his bicycle and began defending King.

Walker, Johnson and their sons repeatedly yelled at the men to get off their property.

Sometime during the argument, Walker, 56, got a sawed-off shotgun from inside his home and fired. King was hit in the stomach, with some of the pellets entering his arm.

Jones also was shot in the stomach. He is still recovering at Detroit Receiving Hospital.

But what happened during the fight is in dispute:

Johnson said Jones punched her 18-year-old son, Daniel Harris, in the face and King raised the baseball bat. Johnson said the family had fought with King before about cutting across their lawn.

King's mother, Juanita McGee, said in a shaky voice Monday that her son "had a big heart. He was a giver."

King has no adult criminal record in Wayne County.

"They're trying to make it like my son did something wrong," McGee said. "He shot my child."

Walker faces up to life in prison. His preliminary exam is expected early next week.

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ILLUSTRATION: Photo

CAPTION: Douglas Walker, 56, is charged with murdering 17-year-old Lorenzo King.

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