

## **Family insists suspect is innocent - Exam adjourned in alleged assault during fracas that killed woman.**

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TAYLOR -- Three **suspects** already have been freed in the July homicide of a mother of six, and the **family** of the fourth insisted Thursday that he, too, **is innocent** .

"It's ludicrous the way they are handling this case," said Terry Moore, 45, an uncle of JuJuan Willis. "They are just trying to pin it on somebody." A preliminary examination began Thursday in 23rd District Court to determine whether Willis, 22, will stand trial on two counts of felony assault with intent to commit murder in a July 30 fracas that killed Wendy Meinke, 38. It was adjourned until Sept. 28.

The case has drawn protests because two black teens, Franklin Smith and Devin Plummer, were jailed in the shooting of the white woman. They were freed when ballistics tests showed Plummer didn't fire a gun. A 14-year-old was jailed but released for lack of evidence.

Willis, who remains jailed, **is** not accused of shooting Meinke, but prosecutors allege he fired a gun during the melee.

Cpl. Michael Lividini testified that Willis signed a one-page statement saying he misfired his .38 caliber several times before shooting once in the air.

Another Taylor police officer testified that six .45-caliber shell casings were found on the scene, and there were also a bullet in a tree and three steak knives.

Witness Natasha Moran-Gainor testified about 10 men visited her home July 30 when one of them, whose nickname **is** D-Lo, said he had gotten into a confrontation with Meinke's adult son, Joshua. But Joshua Meinke testified he was the victim of a verbal assault by the man as he went to visit his mother to pick up some clothing. "After the first shots were fired, I tried to get my mother to the ground," Meinke said.

Caption: Meinke

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