

Suspect in officers' slayings is charged - He planned to deal drugs, brother says

Detroit News, The (MI) - Wednesday, February 18, 2004

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DETROIT ? The man charged with killing two Detroit police officers was planning to get into the drug trade and recently had purchased a gun on the streets, his brother has told investigators.

The disclosure in court papers released Tuesday begins to offer some explanation for the Monday morning shooting that began with a routine traffic stop in southwest Detroit. The deaths of officers Matthew Bowens, 21, and Jennifer Fettig, 26, left many stunned that such a minor matter could end so violently.

Eric Lee Marshall, the suspected triggerman, seemed to grasp the enormity of it all on Tuesday, his 23rd birthday.

As a 36th District Court clerk read the murder and firearm charges against him, **Marshall** fell to the floor.

Staring straight down for most of his three-minute arraignment, he could barely say his name. He fought back tears and meekly whispered, "Yes ma'am" to Magistrate Margaret Baylor when she asked him if he understood the charges against him.

Police officers practically held him up as Baylor told him there would be no bond in the case. **Marshall** now is scheduled for a preliminary examination on five felony charges March 1.

Outside the courtroom, Bowens' father, James Bowens of Lincoln Park, pleaded for the public to support instituting the death penalty on those who kill police officers. Capital punishment is outlawed by Michigan's constitution.

"He died trying to save people like you and everybody else," Bowens told reporters. "Don't let that death go unnoticed. Nobody has respect for police. We need to change that."

Interim Wayne County Prosecutor Kym Worthy and U.S. Attorney Jeffrey G. Collins denounced the killings and announced with other public officials that next week, they plan to detail a public awareness campaign intended to change the "culture" of crime in the area.

Shootings in Detroit surged in the first six weeks of the year. For example, there were 35 homicides in January this year compared to 26 in January 2003.

The city ended last year with 361 slayings, its lowest total since 1967, though the population has fallen about 40 percent since that year.

At **Marshall** 's preliminary exam, at least two witnesses might testify that they saw the traffic stop and the slayings, records show.

Police said **Marshall** told his brother he had shot the officers, saying "I blew some cops away." **Marshall** also made related "admissions" to investigators, but declined to say what those were, police said. Arron **Marshall** told police **Eric Lee Marshall** "and another male, who recently got out of jail, was going to set up a 'spot' (drug operation)." Arron **Marshall** also told police his brother had recently bought a gun off the streets.

Police found 22 .40-caliber shell casings at the scene of the shooting on Gilbert near Michigan Avenue. They still have not found the gun used in the killings or Bowens' pistol, which was taken from him after the shooting.

About 2 a.m. Monday, Bowens and Fettig had stopped a rusted 1989 Chevrolet pickup registered to **Eric Lee Marshall** and likely were about to make a computer check of the vehicle's license plate when the shooting began, said Major Crimes Division Cmdr. Craig Schwartz.

Both officers were in their police car at the time the gunman got out of the truck, approached the passenger side, where Fettig was sitting, and shot her in the face.

The gunman disappeared into a nearby fence line as Bowens called for help, Schwartz said.

As Bowens moved behind his police car, **Marshall** shot him nine times, took his gun and left him for dead, Schwartz said.

The traffic stop was partially caught on videotape inside the police car, but investigators have said the tape does not depict much of the incident.

Funeral, visitation

* Visitation for Officer Matthew Bowens will be 2-9 p.m. today and 1-9 p.m. Thursday at the Martenson Funeral Home at 10915 Allen Road in Allen Park.

* Visitation for Officer Jennifer Fettig will be 5-9 p.m. today and 1-9 p.m. Thursday at the same funeral home.

* Funeral services for both are scheduled for 10 a.m. Friday at Greater Grace Temple at 23500 West Seven Mile in Detroit.

* Burial plans for Bowens and Fettig were unavailable Tuesday.

Caption: Southwest Detroit residents Kim Sandford, left, and Sandra Barylski add to a memorial on Gilbert Street for slain officers Matthew Bowens and Jennifer Fettig. **Eric Lee Marshall** fell to the floor when murder and firearms charges against him were read in 36th District Court on Tuesday. The slayings rallied the community and brought a call for the death penalty for those who kill officers. Bowens Fettig

Edition: Two Dot

Section: Metro

Page: 01B

Index Terms: POLICE-KILLED & INJURED ; ARRESTS ; CRIMINALS

Dateline: DETROIT

Record Number: det18306216

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