

The Michigan Citizen

Stories by Diane Bukowski

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Serial Killer Kops?

"We teach our officers to shoot to kill."

Acting Detroit Police Chief Benny Napoleon, in testimony before Detroit's City Council.

Is a Detroit police officer - who has killed three people since he joined the force in 1993 - a logical result of the policy cited by Benny Napoleon, above? Are there others like him?

With grim determination, Arnetta Grable and Herman Vallery have spent the last three and a half years uncovering the truth about Eugene Brown's record.

Their son, Lamar Grable, was killed by Officer Brown in 1996, Despite the "wall of silence" police administrators erected in the case. Grable and Vallery have finally succeeded in identifying two other young men who lost their lives at Brown's hands, and made contact with their families.

They have also uncovered records of other lawsuits and complaints against Brown. These include a suit brought by a fellow police officer, Loronzo Jones, who says that during a traffic stop, Brown dragged him out of his car, hit him on the head with his gun, and pepper sprayed him without cause. A process server filed a complaint against Brown because he threatened her when she served Officer Jones' lawsuit on him.

In a deposition given in 1998, Brown admitted to having fired his gun in five separate incidents since 1993. He has fired it at least twice more, in January 1999 and January 2000. Police Commander Sidney Bogan recently confirmed that the Departments is investigating the last incident, in which Brown discharged his gun at alleged shoplifters outside the Toys R Us

at the Tel-Twelve Mall while off duty. In all the "shots fired" cases, Brown's partners did not use their guns. In one case, his partner apprehended a fleeing suspect by hand after Brown had shot at him.

Brown, who is African-American and 33 years old, was born and raised on the east side of Detroit near Mack and Van Dyke. After graduating from Kettering High School in 1985, he spent six years in the Marine Corp. He entered the Police Academy in May of 1993. Brown worked in the 10th Precinct, then was assigned to Mayor Dennis Archer's personal security force for six months in 1994. He was later assigned to the Harbormaster Unit at Belle Isle.

After the shooting of Lamar Grable in September 1996, he worked again in the 10th precinct, and then in Eastern Precinct Support. In May of 1998, he took his current assignment in the city-wide Tactical Services Section.

Brown has recently acted as a spokesperson for the Detroit Police Department, once during media coverage of the schoolgirl rapes, and again on March 10, when he commented on TV about a police raid at a "chop shop," where stolen vehicles were allegedly stripped for parts.

Detroit Police Chief Benny Napoleon was asked in February whether the record of three killings by Eugene Brown in less than seven years is normal. He responded that it was unusual, but said, "What would you do if these individuals came at you with a gun?"

However, even Police Department records in two of the three killings do not claim that the victims had guns.

Rodrick Carrington

According to his family, all 30-year-old Rodrick B. Carrington had in his possession at the time of his death on February 9, 1995 was a Bible.

"He was the last person in the world to carry a knife," says his brother Roosevelt Carrington Jr.

Carrington, the youngest of five children of Roosevelt, Sr. and Mattie Carrington, was born in Birmingham, Alabama. He was a football star at East Catholic High School and an aspiring boxer. He served in the U.S. Navy and obtained a degree in mechanical engineering.

On February 9, 1995, at about 2 a.m., Carrington was at the corner of W. Grand Boulevard and Grand River. Roosevelt Carrington Jr. says a witness in the case, Sharon Easley, saw him at the Amoco station trying to use the pay phone which did not work. He went inside to get change, then drove to the Mobil station across the street.

He was on the pay phone there when Officer Eugene Brown and his partner Craig Stewart drove up. In his statement, Brown says that he had observed Carrington's gray station wagon going in and out of the gas stations and noted that it had no license plate or temporary sticker. When he questioned him, Brown says Carrington got out of the car and began advancing on him.

According to a written affidavit in court files, Sharon Easley said that Carrington was retreating, with no gestures or acts that appeared to be threatening, when he was shot three times by Officer Brown.

In his written report given that day, and in the deposition he gave later in the case, Brown said that Carrington pulled a "steak knife" and advanced at him with the knife over his head. In his deposition given in the Lamar Grable case in November 1998, Brown said that Carrington pulled two steak knives, the second one after he was shot the first time.

Police Officer Harrison Jenkins, called to the scene after the incident, said in his report that he saw what "appeared to be a knife" next to Carrington, then wrote in capital letters that

Carrington "DIED" after being transported to Henry Ford Hospital.

Carrington was shot three times by Brown. The first shot lodged in the Bible he was carrying, over the left side of his abdomen. The second shot hit him in the right side of the abdomen and the third shot in the shoulder.

Roosevelt Sr. says that although he knows the family of Benny Napoleon, who was second in command at the time, he received no help from the Police Department when he inquired into his youngest child's death. Roosevelt Jr. says he contacted Wayne County Prosecutor John O'Hair last summer but has yet to hear back from him.

Attorney Ernest Jarrett filed suit in Wayne County Circuit Court on behalf of the Carrington family. The lawsuit was dismissed by Judge Isidore Torres in February 1998. Roosevelt Jr. says the lawsuit failed because Sharon Easley was unwilling to testify and Officer Craig Stewart never showed up for his scheduled deposition.

Lamar Grable

Says Arnetta Grable of her first-born child, "Lamar wrote poetry and stories, and played violin and Keyboards. He was quiet and shy, he expressed himself on paper. He was an activist, but preferred a background position. He recruited for the NAACP. And he started YES, Young Entrepreneur System. His videographic business was one of the businesses started out of that.

"Two weeks before he was killed, he spoke at a 'Save the Children' conference where he introduced the issue of police brutality against Black youth. Lamar would advise his brother how to behave if he was ever stopped by the police - not to make any false moves, not to reach into his pocket, not to get smart with

them.”

Ms. Grable says that on the day of his death, her son was in a "happy and satisfied" frame of mind because he had just started a new job and spent the morning at orientation. "His disposition that day was far from one where he would have been going out shooting a cop. Lamar had no police record of any kind.”

Lamar's father Herman Vallery said his son left his home on Canton the night of September 21, 1996, fifteen minutes before neighbors came running to let him know that Lamar had been shot. Lamar's cousin Reginald Hudgens, who lived on Field, said in a police report that he and Lamar had walked to a neighborhood church where a party was in progress.

When they were turned away because the party was almost over, he says they split up. He went to get his hair done at a neighbor's house on Field and saw Lamar walking across a vacant lot at St. Paul and Field. Only moments later, he says, he saw a police car going up a nearby alley and heard eight gunshots. When he and his mother ran to the scene, they saw Lamar on the ground.

Police cordoned off the neighborhood and moved the angry crowd away from the scene. By the time Lamar's father and mother got there, Lamar had been transported to Detroit Receiving Hospital by EMS.

Officer Brown says in his report that he and his partner Vicki Yost observed a man at the intersection of E. Grand Boulevard and St. Paul. He says that he saw the man "remove and conceal" an object which he thought to be a weapon, although in his deposition he says the man was openly carrying a gun in his left hand when he first spotted him.

Brown claims that the man ran when they got out of the car and told him to stop. Brown says he pursued him on foot through an alley between E. Grand Boulevard and Field while

Yost pursued him in the scout car. Brown admits that he lost sight of the person he was pursuing for a time while he was in the alley.

When he came out of the alley, says Brown, he saw Lamar in a vacant lot next to 1764 Field and claims Lamar fired at him and he returned fire. He says he and Lamar then collided and Lamar fired two more shots, hitting him in his bullet-proof vest. He then fired several more times into Lamar's chest at close range.

The autopsy report from the Wayne County Morgue shows that Lamar was shot twice in the back, not at close range, with one wound penetrating his heart and lungs. He sustained six other gunshot wounds to his chest and arms, three in the chest at close range. Herman Vallery says he believes the two bullets in the back were the first shots.

"He was already what you would consider 'stopped' - there was no necessity to shoot him anymore. All the other six shots were murder - plain, senseless slaughter and murder which you would not even do to an animal."

Officer Vicki Yost refused to give a deposition in the case, pleading her Fifth Amendment right against incriminating herself.

Brown was given an award for wearing his bullet-proof vest in the incident by Mayor Dennis Archer. Says Arnetta Grable, "The Mayor said Lamar was just a hoodlum on the street who shot one of his boys, and this was an example to the city - if anyone messed with 'his boys,' they'd bring him down.'"

She and Herman Vallery say that Lamar did not own a gun and that the Department has no physical evidence connecting him to the gun Brown claims he was carrying. Police files given to Grable's attorney do not indicate that an ownership trace was ever performed on the gun.

The Detroit Police Board of Review declared

Lamar's death a "justifiable homicide" in November 1996. The civil lawsuit, filed by attorneys Sheldon Miller and O'Neal Wright, is scheduled to go to trial in front of Judge Isidore Torres on the county side of the Coleman A. Young Municipal Center on April 24, 2000

Darren Miller

Edith Miller says the death of her 34-year-old son Darren Miller has devastated her large, close-knit family. She has two daughters and four other sons, one of whom still cannot talk about Darren without bursting out into tears. "We can't put a closure to it because we don't know what happened. Why did the policeman think he had to shoot?"

Miller and her daughter Carol say Darren was brought up to respect authority and the police in particular. They and Ed Klee of the Free Wheelers Motorcycle Club, to which he belonged for ten years, say that Darren was not aggressive.

"Not only would he not fight, he would run from a fight if he had to, ever since he was a little child," says his mother.

"I've never even seen him angry," says Klee. "It just wasn't his nature." They say that Darren, who was known as "Krunch" to Free-Wheelers members, had no criminal record.

Miller served in the Army and worked for the last ten years of his life as a machinist at Motor City Bending on Detroit's east side.

On the night of January 22, 1999, he and his wife Sandra were getting ready to go home from the Free Wheelers club, which is located on Lynch Road West of Van Dyke, next door to the offices of UAW Local 961. Klee and Miller's family say that a scout car occupied by Eugene Brown and his partner Jason Tonti drove up and Brown asked them what was going on.

Klee says officers at the Ninth Precinct told him that in the 30 years the club has been at that location, there has never been a complaint against the club. He says members are middle-aged, employed and respectable.

When Miller and his wife told Brown that they were going home, the scout car left, but then returned. According to Klee and Miller's family, police claim that Miller and his wife were fighting and that when Brown approached Miller in the vestibule of the club, Miller swung a sledgehammer at him and Brown fired in self-defense.

A lawsuit filed December 30 on behalf of Miller's wife Sandra by Attorney Juan Mateo says that Miller went into the club and the followed. While they were standing and talking arm in arm inside the tiny vestibule, Miller was shot twice in the head by Brown.

The lawsuit says that "miraculously" the bullets missed Sandra Miller, but that "the impact of the bullets caused Mr. Miller's head to explode with blood, spurting and covering Sandra Miller."

Ed Klee says Brown fired through the open-weave metal grate in the upper half of the locked inner door.

Police officers called to the scene broke down the door, says Klee. Sandra Miller was arrested for carrying a concealed weapon, allegedly in her purse. She was not released until early the next morning, when charges were dropped.

In the spring of 1999, several hundred members of motorcycle clubs from around the state of Michigan protested Miller's death at Police Department headquarters at 1300 Beaubien. Although the press was contacted, the only coverage they received was an article in a motorcycle club publication.

One of the cops stood in the doorway holding his hand out like a pistol, firing off shots as the

marchers walked by, Klee said.

Miller's family members and friends say the Police Department and the office of the prosecutor have stone-walled them in their attempts to find out the details surrounding "Krunch's" death.

Last month, they met with a representative of State Attorney General Jennifer Granholm's office. The representative also met with members of the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality, including Herman Vallery. Granholm's aide did not inform members of either meeting that he was already looking in to another killing by police officer Eugene Brown.

OTHER KILLER KOPS?

Arnetta Grable and Herman Vallery say that they want Brown fired from the police force and charged with murder by the Wayne County prosecutor's office. They say, however, that the large numbers of killings by Detroit police officers in recent years indicate that Brown is not alone in his actions.

The organization which they helped form, the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality, has publicized the names of other police officers who have killed citizens under questionable circumstances, and says it is demanding justice for those victims as well.

These include even current Chief of Police Benny Napoleon, who led the operation that killed Jimmi Ruth Ratliff in her apartment on E. Lafayette in 1997. Officer Thomas E. Phillips killed 21-year-old Rahaab White in December 1995, and Officer Marlon Benson Killed 26-year-old Damian Solomon with three bullets to the chest in February 1998.

Arnetta Grable says that since the Coalition started tracking these killings, media reports have eliminated the names of those killed as well as the police officers involved. She says the

Coalition suspects that many more have been killed. She says she was contacted two weeks ago by a mother whose son had just been killed.

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The Michigan Citizen Brown trial:

'Grable walked into line of fire'

August 16, 2003

DETROIT - Lamar Grable inadvertently walked into the line of fire during a wild west-style police chase nearly seven years ago, according to testimony from a key eyewitness.

Reginald Hudgens, who was with Grable until moments before his death, testified August 4 that he last saw Grable crossing Kercheval, at the corner of Field Street, headed toward the vacant lot where he was shot to death by Detroit Police Officer Eugene Brown Sept. 21, 1996.

"I heard seven or eight gunshots," said Hudgens, a cousin of Grable's, who testified during an ongoing civil trial. "Just before the shots, a police car rode down Kercheval, cut up Field and then through the alley, and stopped at the vacant lot."

The car was driven by Brown's partner, officer Vicki Yost. According to her earlier testimony, Yost, who is now a lieutenant, had just radioed Brown that she saw a man they were chasing going into the lot. Brown was running down another alley in pursuit of the man, whom the two had just seen at East Grand Boulevard and St. Paul Street, one block south of Kercheval Street and one block east of Field Street.

The two testified that the man appeared to be carrying a gun, which they said was later used to shoot Brown twice in his bullet-proof vest. Both said, however, that they lost sight of the

man for several moments during the chase.

Hudgens testified that he, his 14-year-old sister and Grable had just left a Police Athletic League (P.A.L.) party where they had been searched for weapons, and that Grable had no gun.

Brown ran across Field Street into the vacant lot, where Grable was shot eight times seconds later. Graphic blown-up photos of Grable's wounds, including three close contact shots in his chest, which tore into his heart and a major artery and vein, and two long-range shots in his back, were shown to jurors who heard testimony from Dr. Werner Spitz, a world-renowned forensic pathologist.

"This is not an infrequent method of execution, which this is," Spitz said, in response to a question by attorney Melissa El, who with attorney David Robinson represents Grable's mother, Arnetta Grable, in the civil trial.

Spitz said that abrasions on both of Grable's shins were sustained in a forward fall to the ground. He said this was inconsistent with Brown's testimony that Grable fell backwards after a sustained hand-to-hand struggle in which Grable twice shot Brown and Brown pumped bullets into Grable's chest.

Police officer Eric Kimble, whose car was first on the scene following the shooting, said that when he arrived, Grable was lying face down, not on his back.

Brown and Yost testified at length July 30 and 31, giving remarkably consistent versions of the incident, in which they both said that they were positive Grable was the man they originally spotted. But Brown testified that Grable was wearing a "blue jean" outfit, whereas Spitz, who examined Grable's clothing, said Grable wore a brown jacket.

The two were repeatedly questioned about why they had not radioed the chase and a description of the man to police dispatch prior

to the shooting. They responded that no emergency existed until the man they were pursuing drew his pistol and fired at Brown. "I've been involved in hundreds of such incidents," testified Yost, who said she had been shot in the leg during one such incident in December 2001. She received a citation for valor, and the shooter received a sentence of 40 years in prison. The lieutenant also said she had received awards for catching a serial rapist and stopping a jumper on the Belle Isle Bridge.

Yost, who pleaded her Fifth Amendment right against self-incrimination during her first deposition on the case, later gave two depositions that substantially filled in details missing from her first written report of the incident, dated the day afterwards.

Several police supporters were present during her testimony, including Deputy Chief Pamela Evans. Evans, who oversees the department's compliance with recent federal consent decrees, later left the courtroom with Yost.

Brown, who remained impassive, polite and soft-spoken throughout his testimony, has had no supporters in the courtroom. Testimony regarding his killings of two other men, and numerous other brutality incidents, was barred from the proceedings by Wayne County Circuit Court Judge Isidore Torres. Torres also barred testimony from witnesses other than those placed on record three years ago by Grable's former attorneys, including testimony from people who were present in the neighborhood at the time of the shooting.

"He drew his weapon out of his right-hand side coat pocket, extended his right arm and fired at me, and I returned fire from the sidewalk," Brown testified regarding his first encounter with Grable.

He said Grable missed him and continued running with his right arm extended to the side, pointing the gun, until the two "collided" behind a mound in the vacant lot,

where a struggle ensued and the final shootings took place. Brown repeatedly referred to Grable's use of his right arm during the confrontation.

During her testimony, however, Grable's mother, Arnetta Grable, said her son was left-handed.

She and Grable's father, Herman Vallery, with whom Grable lived for the last six years of his life, testified that their son, who was 20 when he was killed, was a dutiful and loving child who did not use drugs, alcohol or cigarettes, and was "very happy" about his life.

"Every chance he got, he was shooting videos," said Vallery. Grable ran his own video business, filming weddings and other events, and founded the Young Entrepreneur System (Y.E.S.), a program to teach young people how to run businesses. His parents said he was devoted to his daughter, Brittany, a one-year-old baby at the time of her father's death.

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The Michigan Citizen

VICTORY! Jury sides with Grable

August 23, 2003

DETROIT - After a grueling seven-year battle, the family of Lamar Grable emerged victorious Aug. 6, winning a \$4 million jury verdict for Grable's execution-style slaying by Detroit police officer Eugene Brown.

"I kept my promise to my son, that I would vindicate his name," said Arnetta Grable following the verdict. "Lamar Grable's creator will be Eugene Brown's final judge. The Detroit Police Department and the badge that he wears will not protect him on judgment day."

The night of Grable's slaying on Sept. 21, 1996,

then-Mayor Dennis Archer told the media that Grable was a criminal who had tried to kill a police officer.

Brown, who had served on Archer's personal security staff, was given a commendation by police officials for his actions. Brown had already killed another man, Rodrick Carrington, in 1995, and would go on to kill Darren Miller in 1999.

Grable's father, Herman Vallery, thanked supporters, especially those from the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality and two people who did not live to see the verdict, Lamar's grandmother, Bernice Freeman, and Vallery's fiancée, Jenesia Jennings.

"We're very grateful that the jury did their job and listened to the evidence," said David Robinson, the plaintiff's attorney. "The bullet holes in Brown's shirt and the bullet holes in Lamar's body contradicted the sworn testimony of Brown and his partner, Vicki Yost."

"I'm glad the conspiracy of silence, between Brown, Yost and the other officers who winked at their behavior, has been broken by the community in the form of the jury," said Robinson's co-counsel, Melissa El. "Given time, the truth will always prevail."

In published reports, Brown said he was glad "closure" had been achieved and cited a "one-sided" trial as responsible for the verdict.

The trial was far from one-sided, however, with numerous Detroit police officers backing Brown and Yost's version of events from the stand, and excusing their failure to call in the chase, which ended with Grable's death, to police dispatch.

"Each officer from the stand did the same thing they did on the night of Sept. 21, 1996," Robinson said during closing arguments. "They responded to an 'officer in trouble' run. They joined in lockstep and came to Brown's assistance."

Robinson and El faced an uphill battle. Wayne County Circuit Court Judge Isidore Torres barred the introduction of any witnesses beyond those cited by attorneys Sheldon Miller and Victor Bowman. Grable fired Miller and Bowman in 2001 after they tried to have her removed as personal representative of her son's estate, because she would not agree to a settlement.

The witnesses included many who were present in the neighborhood around East Grand Boulevard and Kercheval Street. That is where Grable lived with his father, and where he died in a hail of bullets in a vacant lot on Field Street. There were so many people present in the area at the time of the incident that police feared a rebellion and cordoned it off.

Torres also barred the introduction of the notorious "Shoulders Report," and later denied Robinson's motion to have its author, Assistant Chief Walter Shoulders, testify as a rebuttal witness.

Shoulders' re-investigation of Brown's actions was ordered in 2000 by then-Police Chief Benny Napoleon after the Michigan Citizen, and later the daily newspapers, exposed Brown's record of killings and brutality incidents.

Robinson said Shoulders dug up the dirt underneath where Grable's body had lain and found bullet fragments, which he said demonstrated that Brown executed Grable by shooting into his chest as he lay on the ground.

Brown testified he shot Grable as the two stood and struggled hand to hand, with Grable shooting Brown twice in his protective vest. Torres, in referring to Shoulders, ruled, "I don't think he can testify to anything that is germane to the theories at this trial."

The jury's verdict, that Brown was responsible for assault and battery and gross negligence, was reached in less than two hours, suggesting the jury unequivocally believed the plaintiff's

theory of what happened.

That theory was that Grable's death was a case of mistaken identity. The plaintiff's argument was that Grable, who was unarmed, and who was wearing a beige Dickey jacket and camouflage pants at the time, was not the man wearing blue jeans and a blue-jean jacket whom Brown and Yost first saw at East Grand Boulevard and St. Paul Street, and whom they then chased.

That theory implicates not only Brown, but Yost and the officers and investigators who arrived at the scene afterwards, as well as the entire hierarchy of the police department under both Archer and Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick.

Brown remains on the force despite his record, and current Police Chief Jerry Oliver and Kilpatrick have also refused to release the Shoulders Report, or act on its recommendations that Brown be criminally charged.

Witnesses called by Robinson and El, including Philadelphia-based expert Dr. John Peters, testified that holes in Brown's shirt and protective vest did not line up and were inconsistent with Brown's hand-to-hand struggle testimony. The implication was that Brown, together with Yost, set up the scene after Grable's killing by firing into the vest and shirt themselves.

Peters said that the gun they claimed Grable had was likely a "throwaway" used by police officers to justify such killings.

Brown's hospital medical records, which arrived at the trial as jury instructions were being read, also contradicted his testimony that he bled profusely and had to have transfusions. Torres was forced to give a jury instruction that the records were "adverse to the defense theory."

If the plaintiff's theory is true, Brown would be guilty of murder, and his partner guilty at least

of aiding and abetting and obstruction of justice.

Grable's parents say they still believe it possible that Yost fired some of the shots that killed their son since no bullets were recovered from the scene.

A neighborhood witness interviewed during the trial said that she heard the first four officers who came to the scene searching for Grable's gun in the alley, saying that they were told he had tossed it there. Those officers, one of whom testified at the trial, backing Brown and Yost's version, would also be guilty of crimes involved in a cover-up.

At a meeting Aug. 10, members of the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality did not accept Brown's statement that "closure" had been achieved. They said they planned to continue the battle for justice in the Grable case until the guilty parties are charged and jailed.

In the meantime, said Grable's parents, they plan to use the proceeds from the jury verdict to establish a scholarship fund in their son's name, among other projects.

Arnetta Grable said the annual vigil at the site of her son's death, to be held Sept. 21 on 1764 Field Street, will be turned into a celebration of his life and the victory that has been achieved to date.

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The Michigan Citizen

FAMILY WANTS JUSTICE FOR GRANDMOTHER MURDERED AT EAST-SIDE GAS STATION

08-27-2005

DETROIT - Sharon Nadine Rouse was a beloved

mother of three daughters, with one grandchild and another on the way, when she was executed July 8 by a single contact gunshot wound to the back of her head, fired by gas station attendant Hassan Rizk.

"She was a sweet, loving person who did everything she could to take care of us," said Rouse's second oldest daughter Dominica Rouse, 22. "I don't understand how anybody could just shoot anyone like that."

According to a police report, the 47-year-old grandmother died at 5:15 A.M. Friday July 8 at the Citgo gas station located at Kercheval and Chalmers on Detroit's far east side. Rizk, 20, has been charged with first degree murder and a felony firearms count, and is awaiting a competency hearing Sept. 26. At his arraignment July 10, Rizk was remanded to the Wayne County Jail without bond.

Homicide Detective Sgt. Gerald Williams recounted the events of that day in his investigator's report.

"The complainant (Sharon Rouse) was standing outside of the front doors of the Citgo gas station located at 14401 Kercheval, when the defendant (Hassan Rizk) stated to her 'get the f--k off my property crackhead,'" wrote Williams.

"The complainant started to walk away from the front doors of the location when she stopped and returned to the front doors once again. It was at this point when the defendant pushed open the front door and pulled a gun on the complainant. The defendant began to push the complainant away from the front doors towards the driveway, when he put the gun to her head and shot her once."

Although police records list Rouse as homeless, Dominica Rouse said that her mother lived with her oldest daughter Michelle, and would just wander off at times. Rouse said her mother was mentally and physically disabled, having lost most of one foot and the toes on the other.

"There was no way she could have presented a threat to anyone," said Rouse, who is a straight-A paralegal studies student at Wayne County Community College.

"I hope that the prosecutors make sure that he stays in prison for the rest of his life. I hope that justice prevails."

Neighbors in the area around the gas station are upset as well.

"She used to walk around up and down through the neighborhood all the time," said Mike Tim. "I never knew her to give anybody any problem. There was no reason for her to be killed. If he killed like that, he can kill again. Murder is just murder. You just don't take nobody's life."

A worker at St. John Congregational Church across the street said he drove up on the scene as Rouse's body, with blood streaming from her head, lay at the foot of a lamp-post already decorated with teddy bears and flowers in commemoration of another death.

Rouse's killing is not the first time someone has died at the gas station, said another group of neighbors who want to see it shut down.

"China was walking out of the gas station in the summer of 2003, when she got shot in front of her children," said Doniqua Sanders, 15. Sanders was visiting China's young cousins at a house around the corner from the station when she was interviewed. "We're scared to go up there. I don't want my mother to go up there."

Sanders said China was caught in a cross-fire at the station and was not the target of the shooting. Other area residents who asked not to be identified intimated that the gas station was known for illegal activities including possible drug-dealing.

"Just think," said one man. "In the middle of this

poor neighborhood, why hasn't that station ever been held up?"

A man at the station who said he was the owner but would not give his name claimed that he fired the man who previously leased the gas station, who he identified as Mike Bazzi, 12 hours after Rouse was killed. He said he heard that Rouse was buried as a "Jane Doe."

The station now sports a big "Under New Management" banner, but neighbors say the same people seem to be working at the station.

City of Detroit tax records list the taxpayer at the address as Ayache Hussien. Calls to a listed phone number for a "Mike Bazzi" in Dearborn were not answered by press time. A Mike Bazzi is also listed as a property owner in both Dearborn and Detroit with the Wayne County Register of Deeds.

Eric Handy, retained as Rizk's attorney, said he would not be able to comment on the case until after the results of Rizk's competency exam are released.

Rouse said no one from the gas station has contacted her family to offer condolences or an apology for her mother's death. She said she and her sisters are grieving and would be grateful for whatever community support they can get, including attendance in court at Rizk's competency hearing Sept. 26, at 1:30 p.m. in the courtroom of 36th District Judge Beverly Hayes-Sipes.

Community supporters who wish to contact the Rouse family can call the Michigan Citizen at (313) 963-8282 or email diane_bukowski@hotmail.com, and their messages will be relayed to the family.

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“Cops destroyed evidence” 8/2007

Judge dismisses Booty Boys case



Daniel Reid and Byron Ogletree

Cops back on southwest streets

DETROIT — In a case involving two police officers known as “the Booty Boys,” Wayne County Circuit Court Judge Carole Youngblood dismissed all charges against Byron Ogletree Oct. 17, ruling that police had deliberately suppressed an in-car videotape of the incident.

“The camera had a full view of when the defendant was accused of resisting arrest, taking officer Parish’s PR-24 [baton] and then turning to Osman and taking his PR-24,” said Youngblood. “The evidence was available and absolutely crucial. It is certainly possible that it would have favored the defense.”

Youngblood is at least the fourth judge to dismiss charges or find defendants not guilty in cases involving stops by officers Michael Osman and Michael Parish of the Southwestern District. Dozens of Black men have claimed that the two officers carried out a reign of terror for months, conducting forced strip and cavity searches on the street.

Youngblood’s ruling comes on the heels of a federal monitor’s finding Oct. 16 that only 15 percent of Detroit police car video cameras are operational, in violation of a federal court order. The finding may prolong the costly federal oversight of

Detroit police, initiated in 2003.

“I’m happy and grateful to God,” said Ogletree, 40, a River Rouge resident and car mechanic with two children, after the ruling.

“Justice has prevailed,” said his attorney Daniel Reid. “It’s a travesty that the Detroit police department has not chosen to comply with the federal consent decree. I hope they will conform in the near future.”

Reid initiated numerous evidentiary hearings prior to the trial, during which he asked for dismissal of the charges against his client.

Ogletree had faced a total of 37 years in prison on those charges, which included disarming the officers of their batons, attempting to take Osman’s gun, and drug possession. He was arrested after the two stopped him for having a cracked windshield, initiating an incident during which a large crowd gathered, shouting, “Police brutality.”

In testimony prior to Youngblood’s ruling, Sgt. Samuel Dunegin said that Reid asked for a copy of the police car videotape either on May 31, the day of Ogletree’s arrest, or the day afterwards. However, he said, a supervisor reported the tape was not downloading properly.

Officer Jonathan Yakomovich, a police video expert, said he could have recovered the footage from the car camera within three to five days if he had been notified. He was not, and the camera recycled, taping over the crucial footage.

Both Osman and Parish testified before Youngblood dismissed the charges. Osman’s wife and Parish’s father attended the proceedings, an unusual circumstance since the officers were not themselves on trial.

Osman said an initial struggle during which Ogletree took his and Parish’s

batons, and tried to take his gun, took place directly in front of the squad car. Parish insisted that it took place off to the side, partially out of view of the car's video camera.

Parish said he pointed his gun twice at Ogletree and threatened to shoot, but re-holstered it while the alleged struggle continued. Osman said Ogletree beat Parish with his baton and punched him in the neck during the struggle.

Todd Gilevich, a U.S. Secret Service agent who happened on the scene later in the course of events and assisted in handcuffing Ogletree, testified that he did not observe Ogletree disarm the officers or place drugs in the undercarriage of the scout car as Osman and Parish contended.

The officers testified that they are again working in the Southwest District on street duty, after a temporary transfer to other precincts while an investigation was conducted. They said that they were never disciplined or removed from the streets, and received no loss in pay.

Sgt. Joseph Tiseo, an internal affairs officer who testified that the FBI has participated with his division in the investigation, would not comment on its status.

Matt Allen, spokesman, said Mayor Kwame Kilpatrick would not comment.

"The Mayor is aware of the allegations regarding these officers, and he understands the gravity of their alleged conduct. He also understands that there is a joint investigation between the Detroit Police Department and the FBI currently ongoing. Pending conclusion of the investigation, he is withholding comment at this time," Allen said.

In another case involving Osman and Parish, 36th District Court Judge Rudy Serra dismissed charges against Mario Adams July 25 after finding that police had suppressed the in-car videotape of his

arrest as well. The prosecutor appealed the dismissal, and hearings on the case were proceeding in front of Wayne County Circuit Court Judge Mary Waterstone this week.

Additionally, Circuit Court Judge Cynthia Hathaway found Marjjo Clyburn not guilty of resisting and obstructing Osman and Parish on May 25. The videotape of that incident, which was instrumental in her decision, shows Parish smashing out Clyburn's passenger side window with his baton only seconds after a traffic stop for a "dangling ornament."

Circuit Court Judge Deborah Thomas found Melvin Shields, Jr, one of four men who testified about Osman and Parish's actions at city council, not guilty on Aug. 21, throwing out evidence allegedly obtained after the officers went in Shields' underwear.

The strange saga of an alleged FBI-paid instigator

Special to The Final Call Sept. 11, 2009

Feds charge webcaster for threats against White officials, not former Black Congresswoman.

Controversial New Jersey webcaster Hal Turner was a paid FBI provocateur when he called on his audience to lynch former U.S. Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney of Georgia while she was still in office in 2006, his attorney told an AP reporter Aug. 18.

U.S. attorneys in Illinois and New Jersey have charged

Mr. Turner with threatening to kill



government officials, including three White U.S. Seventh Circuit Court judges and two state legislators in Connecticut, after he ended his alleged undercover term with the FBI. He is currently being held without bond in Chicago.

“Interesting that charges stem from his comments against Connecticut lawmakers and Illinois judges, but not from the threats against me, a sitting member of Congress at the time,” Ms. McKinney told her supporters in an email. “To whom can I, or anyone else turn, when the government, itself, is the instigator?”

On his website in 2006, Mr. Turner called on his listeners to lynch Ms. McKinney.

“Cynthia McKinney is a violent, Black, racist b---ch,” Mr. Turner said in one post. . . “Given the prevalence of Black crime in America, would it serve the public good to LYNCH Congresswoman McKinney within the next few weeks, while she's on the campaign trail, so as to send an unmistakable message to other Blacks: White people are tired of your bull----, behave or die.”

In a second post, Mr. Turner asked, “I wonder how she would look swinging on the end of a rope? . . . I bet such a lynching would . . . send a powerful message to every uppity n----- in the country— ‘even the most powerful n----- s can get lynched!”

Mr. Turner published Ms. McKinney's office address

on his website, as he did in the case of the Illinois judges. Atty. Michael Orozco, whose firm has represented Mr. Turner for five



years, told the AP that the FBI trained Mr. Turner in the use of such threats to cause the arrests of right-wingers during his time as an agent provocateur from 2004-07.

Ms. McKinney said her staffer John Judge reported the threat to New Jersey Homeland Security and the FBI but was told only, “We know all about Mr. Turner.” No charges were brought.

In an affidavit charging Mr. Turner for the threats against the Seventh Circuit judges, Chicago FBI Special Agent John Marsh said, “FBI agents searched the archived history of the website turnerradionetwork.blogspot.com.”

He cited threats against Indiana Circuit Court judges and others, but not the threats against Ms. McKinney. That website and another run by Mr. Turner have since been shutdown,

Rep. McKinney ran for president on the Green Party slate in 2008, after serving six terms as Georgia's first Black congresswoman. While in office, she called for the impeachment of former President George Bush and Vice President Dick Cheney for launching the war in Iraq, advocated for Hurricane Katrina victims, condemned Israeli genocide against the Palestinian people, and called for an investigation of the U.S. government's prior knowledge of the events of 9/11.

She is now a national and international activist. Ms. McKinney was detained on June 30 for six days by Israeli authorities, along with others aboard the ship The Spirit of Humanity, which sought to deliver food and medical supplies to besieged Palestinians.

Derek Grigsby, chair of the Detroit, Michigan chapter of the Green Party, said, "We wholeheartedly condemn the FBI's behavior in instigating the threats against our presidential candidate. We call for the Obama administration to investigate Turner's threats against Congresswoman McKinney and prosecute him to the fullest extent of the law."

Mr. Grigsby added, "It goes to show that the FBI is and always has been part of a campaign to create a racist and divisive climate in the U.S. in order to maintain the system."

Rep. John Conyers (D-Mich.), chair of the House Judiciary Committee, said that he had not yet heard of the threats to lynch Ms. McKinney, but would call her immediately. The office of U.S. Attorney Eric Holder had not returned a call asking whether they planned to open an investigation into the threats before *Final Call* press time.

Reporter faces felony charges for covering Oscar Grant rebellion



Special to The Final Call

Sep 4, 2009

J.R. Valrey, an Oakland, Calif., multimedia journalist, was bound over Aug. 20 in Alameda

County Superior Court on a felony arson charge related to his coverage of a January rebellion against the police murder of Oscar Grant III.

Mr. Valrey faces up to three years in prison. His attorney Marlon Monroe said his next court appearance is set for Sept. 3.

Mr. Valrey's supporters say prosecutors are pursuing his case despite having dropped charges against over 100 individuals arrested during the rebellion because of his unflinching coverage of "police terrorism" as they term it.

"J.R. has really been a thorn in the police department's side," said San Francisco Bay View publisher Willie Ratcliff, whose online publication has published Mr. Valrey's work. "His stories are like those of Mumia Abu Jamal. He's young and really smart, and the people love him, they are really organizing, so the police are always after him. The judge even tried to get him (Mr. Valrey) to cop a plea to a misdemeanor, something I've never seen a judge do. But they really blew it this time because he didn't do anything except his job. The police even admitted that they didn't see him set any fire."

The proffered plea bargain involved five years of felony probation warrantless searches at any time of Mr. Valrey's body, car, home, and places of employment, time served, and restitution.

Mr. Valrey is associate editor of the Black-owned San Francisco Bay View newspaper, and also a radio reporter for Pacifica, with his own show available online <http://www.blockreportradio.com/>

"I've been covering what we call police terrorism for a good six to seven years, not just in Oakland, but Chicago, New York, and Atlanta," Mr. Valrey earlier told this reporter. "I've covered not only the police killing of Lovelle Mixon after he killed four

officers in Oakland, but the murder of Anita Gaye, a 52-year-old grandmother and Gary King, a 19-year-old Black youth."

Regarding the controversial Nixon case, he said, "The saying among low-income Black people in the streets of East Oakland, and in the Bay area, is 'How does it feel when the rabbit has the gun,'" he said.

"That's a response to all the Three Strikes supporters, police sympathizers and prison industry businessmen. We separate the word 'hero' from the term 'heroic act.' Mason carried out a heroic act, and most Black men between the ages of 12 and 45 in Oakland have felt the same way at least one time."

Among Mr. Valrey's supporters is former Congresswoman Cynthia McKinney, who was in town to aid his newspaper's fundraising efforts, and the Bay area's most popular hip hop broadcaster Davey D, who interviewed her on his behalf. Former Congresswoman McKinney was not available for comment due to an illness in her family.

Mr. Valrey said the Oakland police have not returned the camera he was using the night of the rebellion, his main evidence that he was there as a journalist. Their months-long refusal to give it back delayed his preliminary exam.

The Oscar Grant rebellion Jan. 7 was one of three that took place in Oakland after the New Year's Day murder of the 22-year-old Black man.

Mr. Grant, a father and an apprentice butcher, was lying on his chest when Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Officer Johannes Mehserle shot him in the back. Mr. Grant's murder was captured on cell phone cameras

and posted worldwide on the internet. Mr. Mehserle resigned afterwards, was arrested after the mass protests, and faces trial later this year on murder charges.

Mr. Valrey is also minister of information for the Prisoners of Conscience Committee, an organization headed by Chairman Fred Hampton, Jr., the son of the Black Panther leader executed by police in his bed in Chicago in 1969, as his girlfriend Deborah Johnson, who was pregnant with Fred Jr., slept by his side.

(For information on activities for Mr. Valrey and the fundraising campaign to save the San Francisco Bay View newspaper, contact the Committee to Free M.O.I. JR at <mailto:editor@sfbaview.com>[editor at sfbaview.com](mailto:editor@sfbaview.com), or 415-671-0789.

Detroit cops pull guns on Black crew filming story of anti-drug activist Hayward Brown

27 Dec 2009 15:10 GMT indymedia.org

Four faces charges despite permits



Mark Clyde Bethune (J. Allen), Hayward Brown (Sean Brown), John Percy Boyd (Desmond Williams) in clip from film "Vigilante: The Story of Hayward Brown."

DETROIT – In a case of history repeating itself, Detroit police drew guns and threatened to kill members of a local film crew as they shot "Vigilante: The Life of Hayward Brown" outside the home of one actor Nov. 5. The head of the crew, Sean Brown, is the cousin of Hayward Brown, an anti-drug and anti-police brutality activist during the 1970's.

He heads B.U.P Films, a Detroit-based production company. The police attack on his crew is shown on film because their movie cameras kept rolling throughout the incident.



“I was scared as hell,” said J. (Jermaine) Allen, who rents a home on Plainview. “I was looking down the barrels of six fully-loaded 9 mm. guns. For a minute there I thought that this was it. I just closed my eyes and braced myself. I was glad my girl-friend and two-year-old son had just left.”

Allen is shown being thrown to the ground by a beefy white officer, earlier seen aiming his gun directly at the crew.

“Shut your mouth, don’t f---ing move, you guys know how this looks,” the officer says as he stands over Allen, who asks not to be handcuffed because he had earlier broken his elbow and says they were shooting a film with the proper permits.

In addition to Brown and Allen, crew members Desmond Williams and De’Andre King were nonetheless arrested, handcuffed and ticketed for “possession and brandishing facsimile weapons,” a misdemeanor. They face individual court hearings at 36th District Court Feb 18 and 19 next year, although they should be co-defendants.

King was the cameraman and only possessed a movie camera, which police claimed they thought was a weapon.

The charges are being pursued despite the crew’s claims that they were working through the offices of Mayor Dave Bing and the City Council. One of the officers is heard on the film

declaring, “Forget the Mayor, the hell with Cockrel,” and others are heard telling the crew that they should have contacted the Northwest Precinct directly.

One officer also tells the crew that they were lucky he wasn’t first one on the scene, because “I would have shot your asses, and film crews from “2, 4 and 7” would have been there instead.”

Edward Cardenas, communications chief for Mayor Bing, said, “They did not have the proper permit to film on the day they were filming.” Council President Kenneth Cockrel, Jr. who the crew said was extremely supportive of the film, particularly because it portrays his father, was contacted for comment, but had not responded before press time.

Brown said he had received e-mail threats about the film which demanded that it portray Detroit police in a good light. Allen said that earlier a crew of Black police officers had driven by and waved, indicating they knew a film was being shot. He said that neighbors were very



supportive, coming out to watch the making of the movie, and only “ducking and

dodging” when the Detroit police showed up.

Allen said that particular crew of police has been stopping Blacks in the neighborhood for no evident reason for some time.

“We’re more scared of them than the actual elements around here,” he said. “People call them a ‘military execution squad.’”

The movie tells the story of Hayward Brown, Mark Clyde Bethune, and JohnPercy Boyd, college students in the 1970’s in Detroit. “The three young men had been waging a private war against big-time heroin dealers in their

neighborhoods, says Dan Georgakas in his book, *Detroit, I Do Mind Dying*.

“STRESS [a notorious plainclothes unit that had killed dozens of Black men] had staked out one of the dope houses that the three vigilantes attacked. Instead of pursuing the drug dealers, STRESS chased Bethune, Boyd and Brown. A shoot-out followed which resulted in the four STRESS officers being wounded, while their prey escaped. Three weeks later, in a second shoot-out with the vigilantes, STRESS officer Robert Bradford was slain and another officer wounded.”

Georgakas continues, “In the weeks which followed, STRESS put the Black neighborhoods under martial law in one of the most massive and ruthless police manhunts in Detroit history. Hundreds of Black families had their doors literally broken down and their lives threatened by groups of white men in plainclothes who had no search warrants and often did not bother to identify themselves as police.” One man was killed by the cops.

Police eventually tracked down and killed Bethune and Boyd in Atlanta. Hundreds came to their funerals. Hayward Brown was captured and tried in Detroit, represented by the late famed attorney Kenneth Cockrel, Sr.. Cockrel, Sr. used the strategy of putting STRESS (Stop the Robberies, Enjoy Safe Streets) on trial instead. Massive rallies were held in Brown’s support, including Council President Emeritus Erma Henderson, who recently passed. .

Brown was acquitted of all charges. However, said Sean Brown, his cousin was shot to death in Detroit in 1984 under “mysterious circumstances,” with many believing the police were involved. No charges have ever been brought in the case.

Brown said actors and crews from B.U.P. Films, co-founded by his uncle George Brown, have been all over the country for ten years making movies. But he said they have never experienced such treatment, even in Lapeer, Livonia, and other largely white areas, where portions of the film have been shot. He expressed particular

gratitude to the police department in Lapeer, where officers actually acted in the film.

Detroit police officers normally cordon off filming areas and remain to protect movie crews from major companies everywhere in the city, including downtown Detroit and recently on East Jefferson. The procedure for notification is through City Council to the police before a permit is granted.

“These Hollywood people are coming in and filming all the time, getting tax breaks, but we pay taxes here and this is the way we are treated,” said. He said it is often difficult for local residents to get jobs in their films.

The crew said that everywhere they go, they hire locals. They also better the neighborhoods where they film, cleaning them up, feeding the homeless, and donating portions of the profits from their movies to non-profit groups like the Salvation Army, Purple Heart, and local churches.

“We are not advocates of violence, but people from all over this city, state and nation need to stand up to protest what is happening,” said Allen.

The Michigan Citizen

Two more die as DTE’s profits rise



Marchers commemorate Allen family.

February 21, 2010

DETROIT – In the wake of the house fire deaths of an elderly father and son Feb. 1 after DTE shut off their utilities, Resurrection marchers demonstrated angrily outside the utility's headquarters in downtown Detroit Feb. 11.

Inside, leaders of the Michigan Welfare Rights Organization (MWRO) were meeting with DTE executives.

Protester Gwendolyn Gaines grew up with Jeffrey Garrett, who was living with his father Warren Booker in a home on Calvert on Detroit's westside. Their deaths brought the known toll of fatal house fires this winter to six. Two disabled brothers, Marvin and Tyrone Allen, 62 and 61 respectively, and their housemate Lynn Greer died Jan. 5 after living years without heat.

A baby, Davion Grant, one, died Dec. 6 in a house fire of unreported origin on Saratoga on the city's east side. "Mr. Booker was over 70 years old," said Gaines. "Some of the news reports had the gall to say that someone was intoxicated and knocked over a space heater. DTE must come up with a reasonable plan to save people's lives. People are dying every winter because of shut-offs and then DTE tries to blame it on them, talking about illegal hook-ups and unsafe space heaters."

Channel 7 News interviewed the upstairs resident of the two-family building, Harold Cole.

"I ran downstairs — Pops was in the kitchen, I pulled him out but couldn't get Reno out too," said Cole, referring to Garrett. "We do building and brick masonry, the old man, he's done bricks for 20 to 10 years. He was teaching us. Their gas got turned off and they were using propane tanks."

In published remarks, DTE Energy

spokesman Scott Simon confirmed that the utilities in the Booker-Garrett home had not been active since June 17, 2008, with the gas meter removed in Sept. 2009.

At the scene of a fatal house fire last year on Detroit's east side, Fox 2 News' Al Allen reported, "Arson investigators tell Fox 2 that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of house fires, and when they do their report, in the majority of cases they find that the heat had been shut off."

DTE Energy shut off 221,000 households in the metro Detroit area because of delinquent payments last year, a 50 percent increase over 2008 when 142,000 families were terminated. Reportedly, an additional 150,000 metro households are at risk of shut-off this year.

MWRO President Marian Kramer reported back to demonstrators as the picket ended, saying a delegation of six was still meeting with DTE inside, but that so far DTE was only willing to look at individual cases instead of establishing a broader plan.

Reiterating MWRO's demands, she said, "DTE must turn on service for everyone, establish a moratorium on shut-offs, and develop affordable service plans for low-income people. For over 10 years, MWRO has attended the funerals of seniors, mothers, babies and other poor people after they died while trying to stay warm in their homes."

The Michigan Public Service Commission (MPSC) approved a \$217 million DTE rate increase averaging nine percent per household Jan. 12. DTE reported that it had "self-implemented" a rate increase of \$280 million last July under a new state law which allows utilities to put rate increases into effect if the MPSC takes more than a year to consider their request. As a result, customers this month received a few dollars back on their bills.

A DTE release said, "The rate increase ...

provides solid support for Detroit Edison's 2010 early outlook of \$405 million to \$435 million in operating earnings and the opportunity to earn its authorized return. In addition, DTE Energy is confirming its 2010 early outlook of \$545 million to \$610 million in operating earnings."

DTE additionally announced a dividend of \$0.53 payable Jan. 15 to its shareholders. The company said it will hold its annual shareholder meeting May 6.

Standard and Poors, a Wall Street bond rating agency, reported that it raised its ratings on DTE Energy Co. and its subsidiaries from negative to stable three days after the rate increase was approved.

DTE Energy raked in revenues of \$9.3 billion last year and profits of \$546 million. It is one of the largest energy companies in the country, with gas, electricity, coal and rail subsidiaries. DTE CEO Anthony Earley, who also sits on a regional water board established by U.S. District Court Judge John Feikens, made a \$7 million salary in 2008.

DTE has said that its rate increase was due partially to a decrease in usage and to compensation for delinquent bills caused by the state of the economy.

Allen Adler of the Oakland Press reported Jan. 24 that only a little over half of the typical DTE bill covers service usage. The remainder includes surcharges for meter operation and reading, power distribution, creation of energy efficiency programs and a Renewable Energy Plan, the cost of refinancing DTE's debt on its Monroe nuclear power plant, and even a surcharge for the cost of using the new state "self-implementation" rate law.

Simon responded to the demonstration and the issue of DTE profits in a phone interview with The Michigan Citizen Feb. 16.

"We know utility bills present a hardship for many of our customers," he said, "but there are assistance options available to help. DTE has formed a partnership with many community agencies and together we were able to connect more than 200,000 households last year, using \$120 million in state and federal energy assistance."

Asked about DTE's Winter Shut-off Protection Plan, he said seniors, disabled and others covered under the plan pay lower rates from Nov. 1 to March 31, but must pay higher bills afterwards to compensate. If they are not able to pay those bills, their utilities are shut off and not restored the next winter.

He said WWJ recently held a radiothon to raise contributions for low-income energy assistance, funds which DTE matched. He said customers who have "stolen" service through self-hook-ups are charged higher rates to have the service turned back on, and administrators of The Heat and Warmth Fund (THAW), the Department of Human Services, and other agencies say such customers are not eligible for assistance from their agencies.

