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Police say cop's gun fires, kills Hot Springs man, 39

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Article Text:

HOT SPRINGS - The last words Priscilla Lewis heard from her ex-husband were so familiar, she never thought to press him for more details.

"I'm going to watch the game," he called out as he left the house Monday night. Though the couple had divorced a year ago, they still shared a home.

"I'll see you later," she replied.

In bed with a headache, she didn't bother to ask where he was watching football that night. More than three hours later, Frank Lewis, 39, lay dead on an apartment floor, killed by a bullet fired from an off-duty police officer's brand-new .40-caliber Glock handgun.

Garland County sheriff's office investigators say the shooting appears to have been accidental. The gun went off when Hot Springs police officer Grant Glover brought it out to show Lewis, according to the ongoing investigation.

Deputies were called at 11:25 p.m. to the Grand Point Bay Apartments, where Glover lived. When they arrived, they found the body of Frank Lewis, who had been shot once in the head. Glover's girlfriend also was present at the time of the shooting, family members said.

"The information that we have at this time is that the officer had his firearm out to show it to the other individual and that it discharged," said Capt. Larry Sanders, who oversees the sheriff's criminal investigation division.

"They were friends," he added. "This is still under investigation, but there's no evidence at this time to indicate any foul play."

Asked what caused the gun to fire, Sanders said authorities still were investigating. "We're still interviewing people and trying to piece together what happened."

Glover, 47, has been with the Police Department since February 1995, police spokesman Cpl. Mike Buck said. Before then, he was in the military. Buck said he didn't know in what branch or how long Glover had served.

The officer has been placed on administrative leave pending the outcome of the sheriff's investigation.

While authorities describe the shooting as a tragic accident, Priscilla Lewis and other family members remain incredulous.

How, they ask, could a police officer have been that careless with a gun?

"They've given us no reason as to how it might have went off," Priscilla Lewis said. "He was hit in the face. It messed up my baby's face."

She added that Glover wasn't someone she knew to be one of her ex-husband's close friends. The officer sometimes hung out at Frank Lewis' detail shop when he was on duty, but Priscilla Lewis said she never heard of the men doing anything socially together.

Frank and Priscilla Lewis have three children, ages 22, 20 and 12. They were married for 11

years before deciding to divorce a year ago.

"We got divorced, but then things got better. He never moved out, I never moved out. We still paid all the bills and nothing really changed.

"Up until yesterday, it was like we never divorced."

Frank Lewis came home from work Monday evening, showered and then left the house about 8 p.m., Priscilla Lewis said. At 9:30 p.m., he called the phone in their son's room to ask if the satellite dish was working there, Priscilla Lewis said. Told that it was, he hung up.

At 11:25 p.m., deputies were called to Glover's apartment, where they found Frank Lewis' body.

At 3:30 a.m., deputies arrived at the home of Lewis' parents. Giving them his wallet, they told the couple their son was dead but offered no additional information, Priscilla Lewis said.

Family members say they don't understand why it took so long for authorities to notify them or why they weren't given more details until Tuesday morning.

Sanders said it took awhile to locate the Lewis' house. Because deputies understood Frank and Priscilla to be divorced, they went instead to his next of kin, the captain said.

"Anytime we hear the word 'ex,' we try to contact immediate family instead. There was a little bit of trouble in locating address for the parents. It was just a tragic situation."

The family met with investigators twice Tuesday and was briefed each time on what authorities had learned, Priscilla Lewis said.

But she contends the details have been too scarce.

"You're not giving me answers," she said of the investigators. "It's like you're avoiding me. All I want is answers. If this was an accident, that's fine. Then say you're sorry, but just tell me."

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