

Plain Dealer, The (Cleveland, OH)
May 23, 2006
Edition: Final
Section: Metro
Page: B1

Gunman kills self after standoff in Euclid Cleveland man held ex-girlfriend hostage

Author: Damian G. Guevara; Plain Dealer Reporter

Article Text:

Euclid - Foster Longmire was on a treatment table Monday morning when he saw the crazed intruder holding a gun to the chiropractor's head.

"This is a joke," Longmire, 51, thought.

Then the chiropractor, Jim Cooper, lunged for the gunman's .38-caliber revolver, and Longmire knew it was for real.

The 6-foot-3 gunman pushed Cooper to the floor and pointed the gun at Longmire and two other patients.

"I thought we were dead," Longmire said. The gunman grabbed Longmire by the shirt, shoved him and ordered everyone to get out. Everyone except for Cooper's terrified assistant, 23-year-old Sherell Chunn.

The gunman, Timothy Baker Jr., 28, of Cleveland, came to Cooper's office at 9 a.m. to confront Chunn, his estranged girlfriend.

After Baker forced Cooper and the patients out of the office, he held Chunn hostage at gunpoint for more than an hour in the third-floor suite in the Euclid Office & Medical Plaza, near East 260th Street and Euclid Avenue.

Police and SWAT officers surrounded the building and evacuated hundreds of people from the nine-story building. A police negotiator called Baker, who, by that time, sounded "awfully depressed," Capt. Dave Brooks said. Chunn recently had ended the relationship, but Baker, whom police characterized as abusive, didn't want to let go.

Baker had a history of violence against women. In 2003, he threatened another girlfriend, telling her "he should shoot her dead," according to Cleveland Municipal Court records. He was found guilty of aggravated menacing, received one year's probation and was ordered to get counseling.

Police heard a gunshot about 10:15 a.m. Monday, and officers stormed the office. They found Baker slumped in a chair and bleeding from the right temple. He had turned the revolver on himself, authorities said.

Baker was pronounced dead at Euclid Hospital at 10:45 a.m., Cuyahoga County Coroner Elizabeth Balraj said. An autopsy is scheduled for today.

Plain Dealer researcher Cheryl Diamond contributed to this story. To reach this Plain Dealer reporter: dguevara@plained.com, 216-999-4334

Caption:

Emergency workers wheel out Timothy Baker Jr. after a standoff Monday in Euclid. Baker died at Euclid Hospital from a self-inflicted gunshot wound, authorities said.

DAVID I. ANDERSEN THE PLAIN DEALER Deborah Taylor comforts Anthony Lundy on

Monday morning after a police standoff at a chiropractor's office in Euclid. Timothy Baker Jr., the gunman, took his ex-girlfriend, receptionist Sherell Chunn, hostage for more than an hour. Taylor and Lundy are patients of the chiropractor. Lundy was in the office when the gunman came in.

DAVID I. ANDERSEN THE PLAIN DEALER After being evacuated from the Euclid Office & Medical Plaza Monday, Ester Banks, right, waits with other Visiting Physicians employees. Euclid police and SWAT officers surrounded the building while Timothy Baker Jr. held his estranged girlfriend hostage. He later shot and killed himself, police said.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DAVID I. ANDERSEN THE PLAIN DEALER Deborah Taylor comforts Anthony Lundy on Monday morning after a police standoff at a chiropractor's office in Euclid. Timothy Baker Jr., the gunman, took his ex-girlfriend, receptionist Sherell Chunn, hostage for more than an hour. Taylor and Lundy are patients of the chiropractor. Lundy was in the office when the gunman came in.

Copyright, 2006, The Plain Dealer. All Rights Reserved.