

Domestic Violence Kills Cop

By Jane Eden

Probably the most dangerous assignment a police officer receives is a domestic disturbance call. Frequently, officers find themselves thrust into complex situations where it's difficult if not impossible to determine victim from villain/truth from lie. Such was the case recently in White Settlement Texas when Capt. Scott Monier died from gunshot wounds sustained during his response to a call for backup at a domestic disturbance.



Captain Monier, past recipient of the Congressional Medal of Valor shot and killed during a domestic disturbance.

According to White Settlement Police Chief David Place, Monier and a 68-year-old man suspected of domestic abuse killed each other in a brief, 17-shot gunfight in which both emptied their weapons.

Monier staggered out of the house where the shooting occurred and died two hours later in surgery at a Fort Worth hospital.

SWAT team members found Southall dead when they stormed that house after repeated attempts to contact the man failed.

Evidence in the residence at 9009 Farmer Road indicated Southall fired nine shots possibly 10 and Monier eight, Place says.

“Both weapons were on the floor with their slides locked back. A loaded clip was found in Southall’s pocket.”

Monier, an 11-year veteran of the force responded as a backup to other officers at 1 p.m. Wed., when he entered the back door of the house and was shot, Place says. Evidence indicated Southall fired at least twice before Monier got off his first shot.

Betty Cook, 65, Southall’s girlfriend, said she could have calmed Southall, and neither man had to die.

“It was a useless death on Jim and on that officer,” she says. “If they would have listened to me, stayed away from my house, Jim would have never hurt me. I could have gone in, and we could have left, and all of this could have been avoided.

“I’m not putting the police down. I’m sure they felt they were doing their job. They were protecting me, but they should not have come in my house.”

Police went to the house after Cook’s granddaughter; 21-year-old Brandy Cook called 911 and said Southall had threatened her with a gun.

According to police, Monier, who had just returned from taking some employees to lunch to celebrate Secretary’s Day, was in the

dispatch office when he heard shots had been fired and three officers at the scene needed backup.

Monier, who routinely worked in the office and rarely on the streets, quickly rushed to the scene without putting on his protective vest. "I think he was more concerned about the safety of the citizens and also concerned for the officers on the scene," says Place.

Brandy Cook said Wednesday she called police after Southall pulled a gun on her and her 18-year-old sister after refusing to let them use the telephone. Minutes before, she said her grandmother had confided to them that Southall had struck her the night before.

However, Betty Cook said Thursday that her granddaughter misunderstood what she told them. She said Southall had thrown a key and hit her, and she doesn't believe his actions were intentional.

"Jim had never touched me, he never abused me, he never laid a hand on me," Cook insisted.

Southall displayed the gun to her granddaughters only after they refused to leave the house as he requested, she says.

"He had the gun, and he told them to leave and not to ever come back because they didn't do nothing but cause problems," Cook says. "I said: 'No, Jim. Just get in the house. Go put that up.'"

Cook said her boyfriend never chased the granddaughters as they told reporters after the shooting. Instead, he said, the granddaughters left, and she went to a nearby store to buy cigarettes. She said she returned to find police surrounding her home.

"I told them distinctly: 'Do not go in my house. I can take care of things. Leave him alone. Do not go in my house,'" Cook says. "They said, 'You don't go in there!'"

But Cook said she walked toward the front door, where Southall was standing with the gun.

"I was talking to Jim, and he was backing in the house to get away from them," Cook says.

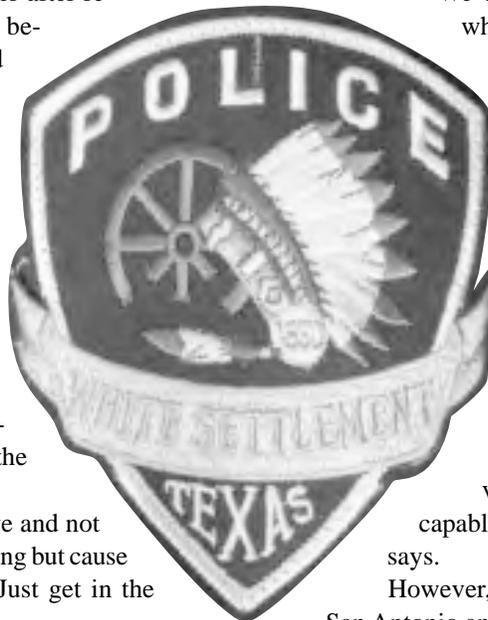
"I said, 'Jim, go put the gun down.' He backed into the house. He wouldn't look at me. He was scared, but I knew he could hear me."

Cook said she next heard four to five gunshots ring out.

"I heard him hollering. I didn't know the officer was even inside," Cook says. "I thought [Southall] might have shot himself or was just shooting or they were shooting at him through the window. I couldn't figure out where the gunfire was coming through or who was doing it."

Cook says she believes Southall did not intend to hurt anyone, but was surprised at Monier's presence in the home and fired as a reflex.

"I think it was because he scared him," Cook says. "I'm sure the officer probably thought he could get up behind him and maybe apprehend him. I do feel that he [Southall] did not know he was in there."



Preliminary autopsy results revealed Capt. Scott Monier sustained five wounds and James Southall seven during an intense and brief shootout.

Cook said Southall was not as violent as portrayed.

She said she and Southall were childhood friends in DeLeon and that they reunited about 10 years ago after Southall, a divorced father, learned that Cook was living in White Settlement.

"We enjoyed each other's company," says Cook, whose husband died years ago. "We both were alone. We enjoyed traveling. We enjoyed being with each other. We could talk over old times."

Place said Cook called Thursday to complain about the condition of her house after the shooting. The Police Department will provide money from a special fund to help with cleanup and repairs, he says.

Cook said Southall was a retired Air Force pilot in the military's "secret service," unit and once served as a bodyguard to President Eisenhower.

"He'd been all over the country. He was very intelligent, a very well-liked soldier, very capable of what the military demanded of him," Cook says.

However, officials at the Air Force Personnel Center in San Antonio and the Air Reserve Personnel Center in Denver could find no records showing that Southall was an Air Force retiree or that he had served.

Cook responded that the records had been sealed because of Southall's classified military assignments.

Monier was past recipient of the Congressional Metal of Valor, husband and father of two children. 🌟

If you wish to contribute to an established fund for the Monier family, you may send contributions to Omni-American Federal Credit Union, 7800 White Settlement Road, White Settlement 76108 or Weatherford Bank, Account No. 848552044, 101 N. Main St. Weatherford, TX 76086.

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