

## **THANKSGIVING TRAGEDY: POLICE RAID WRONG ADDRESS - INNOCENT MAN DIES**

Thanksgiving Day for one local family turned tragic when a mistake by the Sandy City Police Department resulted in death.

Police officers burst into the home of Max Samuel, 35, believing his house to be the location of weapons and drugs. Samuel was on medical leave from his job as headwaiter at Mr. Kelly's Steakhouse.

When the police unit, headed up by Officer June Johnston, entered, Samuel insisted they had the wrong location and a struggle ensued, causing Samuel to suffer a heart attack. He died within minutes in his home.

"My father tried to explain that there were no drugs or guns in the house, but the police wouldn't listen and one of them started pushing my father around," said Laura Samuel, Max Samuel's oldest daughter.

Acting on a tip of an informant, the police obtained a search warrant to look for drugs and weapons. The informant told the police to go to 4245 W. May Street, in Sandy City. A clerical error on the warrant transposed the numbers, causing the police to raid the Samuel's house at 4542 W. May Street.

"My father kept saying he was innocent and Officer Johnston kept pushing my father and screaming, 'Respect My Authority'," said Ms. Samuel. "Officer Johnston was out of control and should not only be removed from the force, but should go to prison for murdering my father."

When asked about the incident, Officer Johnston's only comment was, "In this business, mistakes happen."

Sandy City Police officials refused comment, stating that the matter would be fully investigated.

## **PROTESTS AIMED AT POLICE OFFICER REINSTATEMENT - POLICE BOARD DENIES REQUEST**

When word got out that the Sandy City Police Department was considering the reinstatement of former police officer June Johnston, groups from a cross-section of the community came out to protest.

Hundreds of people carried signs and chanted protests against Johnston's reinstatement.

Johnston took medical leave in December 1993, following a Thanksgiving Day raid at the wrong address. The raid caused the death of Max Samuel, 45, a popular headwater at a local restaurant. Johnston now is applying for reinstatement as a police officer.

Sources said Johnston asserted in a request for medical leave to have been suffering from an anger management disorder as well as post traumatic stress syndrome.

In testimony before the Police Board, Johnston claimed to have taken anger management classes and psychological counseling. Johnston also told the Board, "I will do anything - anything at all - to become a police officer again."

Laura Samuel, Max Samuel's daughter, testified against reinstating Johnston. She told the Board, "If you put Johnston back on the force, then you dishonor the memory of my father; you also dishonor every law abiding citizen of Sandy City. Johnston wasn't even charged in my father's death."

Following a closed discussion, the board announced in a terse statement, "The Petition for Reinstatement is denied by a 5-4 vote".

Johnston was unavailable for comment.

# CHIEF OF POLICE INDICTED FOR CORRUPTION

The U.S. Attorney's Office announced yesterday that Ronald Bridges, Chief of the Marshall City Police Department, was indicted for official misconduct.

Bridges, Chief of Police for the past 15 years, is accused of using his office to protect a drug dealer named in the indictment as "Witness A."

I am innocent of these charges can't wait to have my trial and prove my innocence," said Bridges in an exclusive interview with the Marshall Tribune. "I wasn't removed from office - I quit because I don't want to work in an atmosphere where people listen to drug dealers and don't trust the police officers who are out on the street watching their backs."

Rumors had been circulating in City Hall that Bridges, had been getting kickbacks from drug dealers in exchange for protection. Until the indictment, however, none of the charges against the Chief seemed to stick.

Chief Bridges, released on a \$50,000 cash bond, resigned immediately following the announcement of the indictment.

Bridges, a widower, has no family except a brother, Charles Bridges, a retired city worker. Charles has one child, Jan, who is a police officer in the narcotics unit, and a recent law graduate.

The trial date for the case has not yet been set.

## CHIEF BRIDGES GUILTY

Following a three week trial and five hours of deliberation, a Federal Jury found former Marshall City Chief of Police Ronald Bridges guilty of official misconduct and conspiracy.

Both the prosecutor and the defense attorney agreed that the prosecution's key witness, originally named in the indictment as "Witness A," and later revealed to be Reginald "Lucky" Stokes, was primarily responsible for the conviction.

"Yes, Lucky Stokes is a drug dealer who got a good deal for his testimony, but he told the truth, and we are vindicated by the jury's verdict," said Fred Brady, Assistant United States Attorney. "We don't pick our witnesses - the defendants do the choosing, by their own illegal actions."

Ed Adams, the high-profile criminal defense attorney, who represented Bridges in the trial, commented, "Lucky Stokes is a drug dealing liar who sold a bill of goods to the jury. We will appeal and Chief Bridges will be vindicated."

Bridges, still out on bond, is looking at a possible 50 years in prison. Sentencing has not yet been set.

## DOPE DEALER KILLED IN CRACKHOUSE RAID HAD KNIFE TO THROAT OF COP

“Lucky” Stokes, dope dealer and key government witness against former Marshall City Police Chief Ronald Bridges, ran out of luck yesterday.

According to police, Stokes was apparently taken by surprise during a police raid on a crack-house at 1901 West Madison Street. He was shot when he tried to cut the throat of police officer Bobby Lee.

Lee described the event as “happen[ing] in two seconds.”

“We went into this unlit room. We had announced our presence, even though we thought the place was empty. I felt something at my throat and I heard the explosion of a gun. When I looked down, Stokes was dead on the floor and there was a big kitchen knife next to his hand.

Lee’s partner, Officer Jan Bridges, had saved the young officer’s life.

“I didn’t take the time to aim,” Bridges said. “All I saw was my partner in danger and had to save my partner’s life. I’m no hero. I just did what I had to do.”

Ironically, Stokes was the major witness in the corruption case against former Chief of Police Ronald Bridges. That trial ended with Bridges conviction. Bridges is currently served a 20 year sentence.

According to police department sources Jan Bridges is the nephew of the former chief and was the Chief’s driver for some time. Bridges refused to comment.

I owe my life to Jan Bridges. I don’t think I will ever be able to repay that debt,” said Officer Bobbie Lee.

A preliminary investigation with the Internal Affairs Division of the police department has reviewed the shooting and declared it to be, “a justified use of deadly force”.