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The Providence Journal

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A mother says Pawtucket police didn't have to shoot her son



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BOB THAYER

The police leave the scene after a patrolman's fatal shooting of a 30-year-old man at 71 Lupine St. in Pawtucket on Tuesday morning.

'I called them for help'

BY BRANDIE JEFFERSON, TATIANA PINA and TOM MOONEY
JOURNAL AND PROJO.COM STAFF WRITERS

Betty Swift said when her 30-year-old son had emotional problems a few months ago in Massachusetts, she called the police for help. They took him to Massachusetts General Hospital without incident. "I thought he could get the same help here," she said yesterday in a telephone interview.

"But I was wrong." On Tuesday, a Pawtucket police officer shot and killed Jason M. Swift in the apartment he shared with his mother, at 71 Lupine St. It was the fourth fatal police shooting in Pawtucket in two years. "I called them for help and they killed him," she said. Betty Swift said she went to a neighbor's home to call the police after her son began

talking to himself Tuesday morning. She said her son had had what she described as a non-violent "nervous breakdown" a few months earlier. She said she called 911 for help getting him to Butler Hospital, a private psychiatric facility in Providence. When the police arrived, at about 7:30 a.m., Betty Swift said, "I told them he's a big man

SEE **SHOOTING, A11**

WHJY parent to pay \$22 million

Clear Channel Broadcasting, which was sued over the 2003 blaze, says it wasn't responsible for the fire that killed 100 people and injured 200 others but wants to help bring closure to the survivors.

BY TRACY BRETON
JOURNAL STAFF WRITER

PROVIDENCE — Clear Channel Broadcasting has tentatively agreed to pay \$22 million to the victims of The Station nightclub fire, bringing the pool of settlement money offered thus far to \$71.5 million.

THE STATION NIGHTCLUB DISASTER

Fire marshal who inspected The Station before the blaze retires on a disability pension.

Page **A9**

Lawyers for those who lost loved ones or suffered injuries in the February 2003 nightclub fire sued Clear Channel because it owns Providence radio station WHJY, one of the sponsors of the Great White concert at The Station.

The performance began with a burst of pyrotechnics that ignited the club's foam soundproofing and led to the deaths of 100 people. More than 200 others were injured in the blaze.

One of WHJY's disc jockeys, Michael

SEE **SETTLE, A9**

Iway work questioned by DOT

The state police looked at allegations that rustproofing applied to the new Route 195 bridge did not meet specifications, but say it was an internal matter, not a criminal case.

BY KATHERINE GREGG
JOURNAL STATE HOUSE BUREAU

PROVIDENCE — Before closing out their investigation of operations at the state Department of Transportation, the state police say they looked into DOT Director Jerome Williams' concerns that a major highway contractor may have shorted the state on rustproofing material — specifically, molten zinc — it was supposed to apply to the metal on the newly opened Iway bridge.

They questioned the former state auditor who raised unheeded warning flags in 2003

SEE **PROBE, A4**



WJAR CHANNEL 10

A law-enforcement official examines a car in the 2001 fatal shooting of Alfred Torres by a state trooper.



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BOB THAYER

Pawtucket Police Chief George L. Kelley III fields media questions Tuesday after the fatal shooting of Jason Swift in his house.



THE PROVIDENCE JOURNAL / BILL MURPHY

Pawtucket police officers examine a car driven by a man shot and killed in April 2006 by a police officer following a robbery.

DEADLY FORCE

Since mid-2001, law-enforcement officers in Rhode Island have responded to a dozen incidents where they had to use deadly force to subdue suspects. Each time, grand juries or the attorney general's office have decided not to prosecute the officers.

Feb. 12, 2008 Pawtucket police officers shoot Jason M. Swift, 30, after responding to Lupine Street about an "emotionally disturbed individual with a knife." The police said Swift brandished a "Samurai-style" sword and struggled with officers.

July 27, 2007 Pawtucket police officers David L. Holden, Mark A. Ramos and Christopher E. LeFort shoot Jason Audette, 34, who had tried to gain access to a Coyle Street apartment at gunpoint. The police said Audette refused to drop his gun. The officers were cleared by a grand jury on Jan. 18.

July 26, 2007 Pawtucket police officer Derek Smith shoots Bridget DeGrafft, 49, of Attleboro, who had hijacked a sport-utility vehicle at knife-point from two teenagers and eluded the police. The police said DeGrafft tried to run over Smith. Smith was cleared by a grand jury

on Oct. 17.

April 8, 2007 Central Falls Patrolmen Derrick V. Lévassieur and Maximiliano Gonzalez shoot Selvin M. Garrido Morales, 27, after answering a 911 call at 71 Rand St. Garrido threatened officers with a kitchen knife, the police said. Both officers were cleared by a grand jury on May 25.

Aug. 20, 2006 Woonsocket police officers used a TASER to subdue Timothy Picard, 41, when he struggled with officers at police headquarters after being arrested in a domestic disturbance. Picard collapsed and was taken to the hospital, where he died within an hour. The medical examiner's office ruled that Picard's death was not a direct result of the TASER shot. On Jan. 30, the attorney general's office said the officers' use of force was "lawful."

July 2, 2006 North Smithfield Patrolman Russell B. Amato shoots shoplifting suspect James Wilcox, 34, of Pawtucket, in a supermarket parking lot. The police said Wilcox tried to run down police with his van. Amato was cleared by a grand jury on Sept. 29.

April 18, 2006 Pawtucket Patrolman Jeffrey S. Allen shoots John D. Martins, 47, after he allegedly robbed a Cumberland Farms store on East Avenue. While fleeing, Martins rammed his car into a police cruiser. Allen was cleared by a grand jury on June 22.

April 1, 2006 Coventry Patrolman Kevin P. Nolan shoots Timothy Gileau in the front yard of his parents' house. The police said Gileau threatened officers with a crowbar and lunged at them. Nolan was cleared by a

SEE **SHOOTINGS, A11**

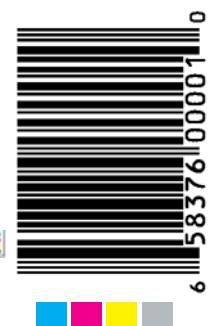
Bomb in Syria kills terrorist wanted by U.S.

BY ROBERT F. WORTH and NADA BAKRI
THE NEW YORK TIMES

BEIRUT, Lebanon — A top Hezbollah commander, long sought by the United States for his role in terrorist attacks that killed hundreds of Americans in the 1980s, died Tuesday night in Damascus, Syria, when a bomb detonated under the car he was in, Syrian officials said.

No one claimed credit for killing the man, Imad Mugniyah, who had been in hiding for

SEE **HEZBOLLAH, A8**



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FANS IN FATIGUES

Iraq, the latest album by the Irish-American band Black 47, is a clear-eyed look at the war through the eyes of American soldiers: Black 47 fans who have gone to war and kept in touch. **E3**

NO-FRILLS GROCER TARGETS R.I.

Aldi Inc., a German company with 3,000 stores worldwide and 850 in the United States, plans to open five Rhode Island stores aimed at low- and middle-income shoppers. **F1**



CLEMENS, McNAMEE CLASH

In front of a House committee, seven-time Cy Young Award winner and former Red Sox star Roger Clemens, left, denies the allegations of the man who was once his personal trainer, asserting "I have never taken steroids or HGH." **C1**