

Bay Area Rap Artist Killed

Written by Robert ID793

Sunday, 30 January 2005 08:16 -

The 30-year-old Santa Rosa man who was shot and killed by a Rohnert Park police officer Friday night was an alleged gang member wanted on numerous felony charges and was carrying a loaded handgun, investigators said Saturday.

Terry Lee Grinner Jr. was shot by Rohnert Park public safety officer Jacy Tatum after turning a .357 Magnum in the direction of pursuing officers, authorities said.

Terry Lee Grinner Jr. was known to the hip-hop and rap community as TL 'Young Grinn' Grinner from the Link Crew. The Link Crew was comprised of rap artist Ray Luv, Young Grinn and Ant D.O.G.. They had hits like 'Forever Hustlin", which was a hit in 1995.

The shooting was the culmination of a pursuit through Rohnert Park neighborhoods in which the fleeing Grinner crashed the car he was driving and ran from officers into an apartment complex off Snyder Lane about 10:15 p.m.

After a brief foot chase, and an unsuccessful attempt to stop Grinner with a Taser stun gun, the officer fired two bullets from his department-issue .40-caliber handgun, striking Grinner at least once in the upper torso. He collapsed next to a garbage bin in the parking lot.

"Officer Tatum was within 10 feet of Grinner. Fearing for his own safety and that of the other officers, Officer Tatum fired two shots," said a statement by the Sonoma County Sheriff's Department, which is investigating the shooting.

Because of the severity of the injuries, the number of times Grinner was hit and whether he was shot from the front or back will not be determined until an autopsy scheduled for Monday, investigators said.

Angela Johnson of Santa Rosa, Grinner's sister, disputed the official version of events. "We're not accepting he was aiming the gun at them," she said. She also denied that her brother is a gang member.

She described him as a rap musician who just signed a record deal. He was the father of five children between the ages of 1 and 8.

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As is the procedure in officer-involved shootings, the initial investigation is being conducted by a separate law enforcement agency.

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Tatum, 22, who has just over a year's experience as a police officer, was placed on paid administrative leave, also normal protocol for such shootings.

A former standout athlete at Rancho Cotate High School, Tatum is the son of former officer Larry Brown, Rohnert Park's first black police officer.

Just two months ago, Tatum was involved in another pursuit through residential streets that ended when the suspect fled his car, ran into an apartment complex and was subdued by Tatum with a stun gun.

Witnesses described a similar foot chase through the two-story complex of buildings at the Americana Apartments.

One resident said Friday night that Grinner was running away when he was shot. But investigators Saturday said there were two encounters between Tatum and Grinner.

At first, Tatum used his stun gun, which makes a loud popping noise. "It either missed or the barbs didn't make contact right," said Sheriff's Lt. Roger Rude. "The Taser did not stop him."

Grinner continued to flee until officers caught up with him in the final confrontation, investigators said.

Witnesses Saturday said they heard the officers shout orders for the running suspect to stop.

"They asked him to "Halt! Stop!" He kept going," said one apartment resident who asked not to be named.

Grinner continued running until he stumbled and fell, dropping the gun he was carrying, according to officials. As officers closed in, they said Grinner regained his footing and his gun, and turned in their direction.

Susan Ellis, a resident of the apartment complex, said she was reading in bed when she heard the sirens. "Then there were a couple of shots," she said. "Just boom, boom."

Sheriff's officials said Grinner had a long history of contacts with law enforcement and was a certified gang member.

Grinner had a \$10,000 warrant out for his arrest for failure to appear in Sonoma County Superior Court last month on charges including kidnapping, domestic violence, threats of death or great bodily injury, unlawful intercourse with a minor, battery and sodomy.

Sheriff's officials said the charges stemmed from a single case, but were unable to provide further details.

Grinner's sister said the alleged victim in the case was an ex-girlfriend who got mad at him and never followed through on the charges.

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Authorities outlined the initial results of their investigation in a statement Saturday.

Events in the fatal shooting began to unfold at 10:11 p.m. Friday, they said, when Tatum saw a 1999 Volkswagen Passat pull out of the parking lot of a convenience market on Camino Colegio. As he passed the oncoming vehicle, the police officer made eye contact with the driver, later identified as Grinner, and saw him put on his seat belt and rapidly accelerate.

In the car with Grinner was a 20-year-old man and two 14-year-old girls.

Tatum turned his cruiser around and put on his emergency lights to make a traffic stop on the Volkswagen, but the driver took off, beginning a chase at reported speeds of 60 mph to 80 mph.

During the pursuit, Grinner ran numerous stop signs as he traveled north on Country Club Drive before turning east on Eleanor Avenue, then south on Snyder Lane. There, four miles and four minutes after the chase began, he drove onto the sidewalk and into a tree next to the Americana Apartments complex.

The passengers stayed in the car, but Grinner climbed out with a large revolver in his hand and ran, sheriff's investigators said.

Meanwhile, other officers converged on the scene. Two officers from Rohnert Park and a third from Sonoma State University pursued Grinner as he fled into the apartments.

The closest was Officer Tatum, who tried to use his stun gun to stop the fleeing suspect. Moments later, Tatum used his pistol.

"When the suspect was shot, he collapsed right on the spot," said Rude. "That was verified by the empty shell casings, blood and where the suspect's gun was."

Rude said it was uncertain at what point Grinner died, because paramedics worked to revive him. He was pronounced dead at Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital.

[Source](#)