

Twista Bodyguard Killed

Written by Robert ID688

Sunday, 09 January 2005 23:00 -

The disc jockey had just stopped the music, the lights were back on, and at 3:10 a.m. the dancing and drinking were over for patrons at Cafe Allure.

Four men outside still wanted in. The head bouncer, a massive man who'd been a security guard to hip-hop artists, turned them away.

"I got this, I'll take care of this," witnesses heard as one of the spurned men turned a semiautomatic weapon on the popular bouncer, Timothy McClellan, in the doorway, then fired blindly into the club.

After more than a dozen shots, McClellan, 34, and another man lay dead early Saturday morning at the dance club, at 1501 N. Dayton St. in Chicago's Goose Island area. A third man, shot in the back of the head, was on life support late Saturday. Four patrons were treated at hospitals for gunshot wounds and were expected to survive.

"The disregard for human life just boggles my mind," Harlan Powell, an attorney for Cafe Allure, said Saturday afternoon. "You don't see somebody throwing off 14 rounds because they couldn't get a drink at 3 in the morning."

Police on Saturday were seeking four men, including at least two believed to have been at a private birthday party earlier in the night on the second floor of Cafe Allure. Detectives have leads in the case but were conducting interviews with many people, police spokesman David Bayless said.

A lounge and bistro that boasts of being "the hottest nightspot in Chicago," Cafe Allure draws a diverse mix of clubbers who sit on leopard-skin barstools or dance to a variety of hip-hop, jazz, house and funk music.

Patrons said it had been a normal night. The birthday party upstairs had ended shortly before 3 a.m. Staff members were cleaning upstairs and the ground floor was still crowded when gunfire erupted.

"We all hit the deck," said disc jockey Jeff Norwood.

Makeda Roby, 28, of Oak Park, was in a group of women who had been dancing and sipping martinis on the first floor. They avoided the gunfire by ducking into a men's room, where several patrons dialed police on their cell phones.

"It just seemed like the gunshots were never going to stop," Roby said. "I can still hear gunshots. ... Some guy busted into the bathroom and said he got shot in the hand. All I could remember was being in the bathroom praying to God to get me home."

After piecing together the scene with employees, witnesses and investigators, club attorney Powell said that between 13 and 15 shell casings had been recovered. He credited the lead

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bouncer, McClellan, for saving additional lives.

"He jumped in front of the gunman," Powell said. "He certainly paid the ultimate price for that."

Police were still trying to determine Saturday whether more than one weapon had been used in the attack.

As McClellan went down at the front of the club, so did his friend, Eugene C. Walker Jr., 24, another bouncer who had worked at the club for only a few weeks. Walker, shot in the head, was severely injured.

Powell said one gunman then reached around the front entry and fired into the crowd.

"If he had actually taken the time to enter the club he could have done serious, serious human damage," Powell said.

Another shot came through a club window. As the assailants escaped they shot and killed another man outside, 22-year-old Tyrone Bonner, who had been inside Cafe Allure, family members said.

Bonner, of the 1000 block of West Maxwell Street, was on parole for a 2002 conviction for carjacking and also had been convicted of manufacture and delivery of cocaine, according to court records. Officials did not disclose how many times Bonner and the other victims had been shot.

His mother, LaWanda Brown, said Bonner was a snazzy dresser who enjoyed playing basketball, received his GED while in prison, and was determined to turn his life around. On Monday, he was scheduled to attend a meeting about a possible custodial position at O'Hare Airport, his mother said. He eventually hoped to attend trade school.

"He was trying to keep himself busy, keep himself active," Brown said. "He was staying clear of people who got into trouble."

An avid sports fan, Bonner enjoyed playing video games with his younger cousins and spending time with his two nieces. Family members say he was especially close with his 3-year-old niece.

"They played the first night it snowed," Brown said. "It's going to be very difficult to explain to her that her uncle is not here."

The other slain man, McClellan, had worked as a bouncer since 2000 for a number of downtown clubs, including Volasati and Door 21, said his longtime girlfriend, Candice Maberry, 24. McClellan had worked at Cafe Allure for the last two years. The 6-foot-4, 300-pound man

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also worked as a bodyguard for celebrities like hip-hop artist Twista, Maberry said.

"People were intimidated by him," she said.

Rawle Stewart, Twista's manager, said he watched McClellan break up a fight outside Volasati early in 2003. He hired him later that year.

McClellan guarded rap artist Twista at concerts and promotional events by putting his arm around the artist's shoulders, Stewart said.

"He definitely stood in front of Twista," Stewart said. "If anybody came toward Twista, they'd have to come through him first."

According to court records, McClellan had three felony convictions: burglary in 1989; robbery in 1993; and manufacture and delivery of cocaine in 1997. He was sentenced to six years in prison for the robbery and seven years for the drug charge. He was released from prison in 2000, his girlfriend said.

McClellan is survived by an extended family that occupied a pair of apartments in the 1600 block of West Sherwin Avenue in Rogers Park. He had planned to surprise his 15-year-old son on his birthday Saturday with money and a car, Maberry said.

"But instead he had a dead daddy for a birthday present," she said. "Somebody just took him away from me. I don't have anybody else in my life."

Saturday night, relatives of Eugene Walker clung to hopes he would not become the incident's third fatality.

Walker, of the 2200 block of West Maypole Avenue, a high school dropout with three young children, had worked at Kmart before starting at Cafe Allure shortly before Thanksgiving, said Cindy Mobley, 24, his longtime girlfriend.

He worked several hours at the club each Friday and Saturday, earning \$100 a night. He was shot once in the back of the head, Mobley said. The bullet exited through the rear of the jaw, leaving a fragment behind. He was unconscious and on life support in the intensive care unit, she said, and doctors are trying to reduce brain swelling with medicine.

"We'll see in 24 hours," she said.

Details were not available on the other shooting victims, all expected to survive.

Mayor Richard Daley, a staunch gun-control advocate, expressed outrage at the shootings.

"There's nothing wrong with clubs, but guns don't belong in clubs," he said. "They're out socializing, they're out clubbing. ... Why should this take place in our society in this day and age?"

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Shaken Cafe Allure owner Frank Babusci, 40, said Saturday that "we run a clean operation."

"I lost two security guards from some ruthless people who don't get it, that's all," Babusci said.

Court records revealed little legal trouble for the club, which has operated under various names since 1998. The Chicago Liquor Control Commission cited the club in 2000, claiming it was operating as a tavern where alcohol sales were the primary business, instead of under its license by which alcohol sales were "incidental" to overall operations. The suspension was overturned by the city's License Appeal Commission. The city then appealed that decision and the case remains open, Powell said.

Babusci and his partners in the club are unsure when it will reopen, Powell said. "The owners are obviously devastated by this," Powell said. "[Babusci] regards these people as his family. He's known [McClellan] for over two years. Everybody's still in shock here."

[Source](#)