

Self-centered brother has siblings at their wits' end



DEAR ABBY ADVICE

superior and better decorated — never considering that my home is just right for me and that I do not lust for more.

DEAR ABBY: I come from a nice family. My siblings are thoughtful and kind, but one of my brothers is a conversational narcissist.

He sees nothing wrong with talking endlessly about his work and his acquisitions, which interest no one.

How can we nudge him toward showing an interest in others? In his times of need, I have been there for him and listened to his troubles, and I have gotten the impression that he's kinder than any of us have assumed.

DEAR SIBLING: Yes, there is. "Someone" is going to have to tell this brother — in as gentle language as possible — that hogging the conversation is as unwelcome as hogging all the food at the buffet.

If no one has the courage to address this, a group intervention may be needed to stanch the motormouth. However, if this is more than any of you want to risk, see this sibling separately one-on-one.

band and I divorced three years ago after he had an affair and destroyed our lives (including his daughter's, who considered me her only real mom).

I held on as well for a couple of years, but as time goes on, I am feeling I'm in an increasingly impossible situation. What my ex did and his actions that followed were incredibly cruel.

this unhappy chapter of my life. I don't want to hurt Dana. I hope that one day she'll understand, but I feel the need to cease contact in order to heal fully.

DEAR TRAUMATIZED: What a sad situation. I'm sorry you feel there is no other way to heal from your ex-husband's betrayal than to distance yourself from Dana, who loves you.

Uvalde locals grapple with school chief's role

By ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON and JAMIE STENGLE The Associated Press

UVALDE, Texas — The blame for an excruciating delay in killing the gunman at a Texas elementary school — even as parents outside begged police to rush in — has been placed with the school district's hometown police chief.

Its left residents in the small city of Uvalde struggling to reconcile what they know of the well-liked local lawmaker after the director of state police said that the commander at the scene — Pete Arredondo — made the "wrong decision" last week not to breach a classroom at Robb Elementary School sooner.

Steven McCraw, the head of the Texas Department of Public Safety, said at the Friday, May 27, news conference that after following the gunman into the building, officers waited over an hour to breach the classroom.

Arredondo, who grew up in Uvalde and graduated from high school here, was set to be sworn in May 31 to his new spot on the city council after being elected earlier this month, but Mayor Don McLaughlin said in a statement May 30 that the meeting wouldn't happen.



Jae C. Hong/The Associated Press

A school building stands behind a tree with an American flag and crime scene tape at Robb Elementary School in Uvalde, Texas Monday, May 30, 2022.

council," McLaughlin said in the statement. "There is nothing in the city charter, election code, or Texas constitution that prohibits him from taking the oath of office."

The 50-year-old Arredondo has spent much of a nearly 30-year career in law enforcement in Uvalde, returning in 2020 to take the head police job at the school district.

When Arredondo was a boy, Maria Gonzalez used to drive him and her children to the same school where the shooting happened.

"He was a good boy," she said. "He dropped the ball maybe because he did not have enough experience. Who knows? People are very angry."

Another woman in the neighborhood where Arredondo grew up began sobbing when asked about him.

The woman, who didn't want to give her name, said one of her granddaughters was at the school during the shooting but wasn't hurt.

Juan Torres, a U.S. Army veteran who was visibly upset with reports coming out about the response, said he knew Arredondo from high school.

"You sign up to respond to those kinds of situations" he said. "If you are scared, then don't be a police officer. Go flip burgers."

After his election to the city council, Arredondo told the Uvalde Leader-News earlier this month that he was "ready to hit the ground running."

"I have plenty of ideas, and I definitely have plenty of drive," he said, adding he wanted to focus not only on the city being fiscally responsible but also making sure street repairs and beautification projects happen.

At a candidates' forum before his election, Arredondo said: "I guess to me nothing is complicated. Everything has a solution. That solution starts with communication. Communication is key."

McCraw said that minutes after the gunman entered the school, city police officers entered through the same door. Over the course of more than an hour, law enforcement from multiple agencies arrived on the scene.

McCraw said that students and teachers had repeatedly begged 911 operators for help while Arredondo told more than a dozen officers to wait in a hallway. That directive —

which goes against established active-shooter protocols — prompted questions about whether more lives were lost because officers didn't act faster.

Two law enforcement officials have said that as the gunman fired at students, law enforcement officers from other agencies urged Arredondo to let them move in because children were in danger.

McLaughlin, the Uvalde mayor, pushed back on officials' claims, including remarks made over the weekend by Texas' lieutenant governor, that they weren't told the truth about the massacre.

"Local law enforcement has not made any public comments about the specifics of the investigation or (misled) anyone," he said in the May 30 statement.

Arredondo started out his career in law enforcement working for the Uvalde Police Department. After spending 16 years there, he went to Laredo, a border city located 130 miles miles to the south, where he worked at the Webb County Sheriff's Office and then for a local school district.

Ray Garner, the police chief of the district in Laredo where Arredondo worked, told the San Antonio Express-News in a story published after the Uvalde shooting that when Arredondo worked in the Laredo district he was "easy

to talk to" and was concerned about the students.

"He was an excellent officer down here," Garner told the newspaper. "Down here, we do a lot of training on active-shooter scenarios, and he was involved in those."

Arredondo, who spoke only briefly at two short news conferences on the day of the shooting, appeared behind state officials speaking at news conferences over the next two days, but was not present at McCraw's May 27 news conference.

After that news conference, members of the media converged at Arredondo's home and police cruisers took up posts there. At one point, a man answering the door at Arredondo's house told a reporter for The Associated Press that Arredondo was "indisposed."

"The truth will come out," said the man before closing the door.

State Sen. Roland Gutierrez, a Democrat whose district includes Uvalde, said on CNN's "State of the Union" that he's asking a lot of questions after "so many things went wrong."

He said one family told him that a first responder told them that their child, who was shot in the back, likely bled out. "So, absolutely, these mistakes may have led to the passing away of these children as well," Gutierrez said.

Gutierrez said while the issue of which law enforcement agency had or should have had operational control is a "significant" concern of his, he's also "suggested" to McCraw "that it's not fair to put it on the local (school district) cop."

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