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## 83-year-old woman murdered by Portland police



Scene of police shoot-out, 5108 N.E. 16th. (Photo: Kris Altacher)

GRASSROOT NEWS, N.W. — Tommy Graves' world came crashing down on him July 5th and his aggressive, armed temper-tantrum created a police response that resulted in his death and the death of an 83-year-old woman whom he regarded as his grandmother.

"Tommy just got his check on the first of July and by the fifth he was broke," recalled James Philips.

"His so-called friends had been selling him junk such as a rusty bike, a two-bit radio and always getting him to buy beer. Tommy said he was tired of people messing over him," Philips added.

Philips said Graves had pulled a knife on him a week ago and later laughed it off by saying he was playing. "Tommy was not dangerous. He was vulnerable."

On Friday, Graves caused his usual disturbance at the Pub tavern, 1526 N.E. Alberta. Robin Coulson, the bartender on duty, said a drunken Graves sputtered out a list of racial slurs at her patrons. His actions at the Pub were not new. "He would come in and ask for ice water, shout racial slurs and cuss everybody out."

On this day Graves threw coffee on Coulson's boyfriend. Her boyfriend and two others chased Graves across the street to a house where he had lived with the family for 14 years.

The house belonged to Mr. Luther Tate where he and his recently deceased wife (she died a year ago) operated a half-way house for mentally impaired adults. After she passed away the family kept Graves who lived there whenever he was released from area mental facilities. Three days prior to this incident, Graves was released from Holladay Park psychiatric ward. Police said proceedings were underway to involuntarily commit Graves when he snapped.

"I saw a white man chasing him. He threw a rock at him and called him a 'darkie,'" remembered B. Robertson, who lived one house down from the Tates.

Viola Palmer, who lived next door, heard Graves shout, "I'm going to get you honkies! He had a gun and was firing into the air."

The first officer on the scene, a white female, never gained control of the situation. Four neighbors witnessed Graves calling her a "B----!" "He would come out and shoot in the air and go back into the house," said one neighbor.

At 8:30 while the police set up barricades to start their containment procedure, Graves sat on the porch and ate his dinner. The police knew Mrs. Tate was inside. Tate lived with her son and would cook for those who lived in their adult foster home.

**Negotiations**  
Graves continues his game of shooting and running back into the

house. At 10:00 p.m. police set up a hostage negotiating post at King School. At 10:26 they made contact with Graves. Detective Sue Hill refused to answer specific questions about the negotiations, but said Graves was very angry. "He was calling everybody names. We were getting nowhere."

Leroy Philips was at the scene when R. L. Anderson, who was wearing a minister's collar, inquired as to what was going on. "He had a car and we drove to a couple of places in the area looking for Mr. Tate," Philips said.

They found him, and Philips introduced Tate to Anderson. They brought Tate to the scene but Sergeant Bill Osborne directed an officer to take the trio to the negotiation post.

Anderson told police at the post that he was a friend and volunteered to help. "He kept saying, 'Let me talk to the kid,'" Philips said. But Graves would talk only to Tate. "He would talk for a minute or two, hang up and go outside and shoot. He did not

want to talk to Anderson," Philips added.

Hill said Anderson spoke for no more than two minutes. However, during the brief exchange with Tate, Graves said the house and Mrs. Tate were "safe."

"In his mind he really thought he was protecting Mrs. Tate," recalled Philips. Hill said the negotiations never got off the ground.

**Green light**  
At 11:30 the negotiating team received orders to pull out. Philips heard "Greenlight" over the police radio.

According to Jay Decker, Public Information Officer for the bureau, Graves' random shooting started getting closer and closer to the police. "At 11:48, St. Osborne gave the orders to shoot if they got a clear sight of him." The officers saw him at the back door and fired three shots. They did not know that they had hit Graves and a radio transmission said

he was coming out the back door," explained Decker.

But Mrs. Tate was coming out the back door. The police had shot out all the street lights so it was pitch dark in her backyard. Twenty seconds after Graves went down, Mrs. Tate came out the back door and was shot by Officer Keith Hattori.

Decker said throughout this incident officers never saw Mrs. Tate, and thought another person was also held in the house. Philips said he was hiding in the bushes when Mrs. Tate was shot and thought he heard her moan.

Because the police did not know what was going on in the house or who was down, Mrs. Tate lay bleeding on her back porch. Graves, with his feet sticking out the front door, was already dead. Mrs. Tate died from loss of blood when officers discovered an hour later that she

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Make swimming a fun sport, not a drowning sport.

## 7,000 people die of drowning nationally

### Red Cross promotes water safe summer

"Red Cross wants everyone to have a water safe summer. There's no good reason that throughout the nation nearly 7,000 people drown when so many opportunities are available to learn about water safety," says Eve Nauman, Water Safety Specialist, American Red Cross, Oregon Trail Chapter.

"For instance, each summer approximately 20,000 youngsters and adults complete Red Cross swimming lessons which include basic life-saving and mouth-to-mouth resuscitation," claims Eve. There is a minimum age of 3 years but no upper age limit for participants. Large pools can be contacted for these affordable swimming lessons.

For individuals seeking more advanced water safety training, several classes are available:

Water Safety Instructor Training, July 8 through 19, Monday through Friday, 8 to 11:30 a.m., Montevilla Pool, NE 82nd & Glisan, \$40 per participant;

Lifeguard (professional) Training, July 15 through August 23, Monday, Wednesday and Friday, 8 to 10:30 a.m., Matt Dishman Pool, 77 NE

Knott. Pre-registration and pre-payment are required for this extensive training. Call 243-7712.

"Red Cross is out to challenge the drowning statistics throughout this country. When you're in or around the water this summer, we ask you to be careful, be trained, and above all, have fun!" says Eve.

For more information about Red Cross Water Safety programs, contact the Red Cross, 243-7712.

#### Oregon statistics

In 1982, 116 drownings occurred. Of those: 20 were boating accidents, 66 were non-boating at public beaches, docks, etc., 16 were at home, 14 other; 75 percent were male, largest group was aged 15-24 years, second largest group was 25-34 years, 1 to 4 years figure in the majority of home drownings, and two-thirds of the victims never intended to get wet.

#### National statistics

Drowning is the third leading cause of accidental deaths — nearly 7,000 people drown each year. Most victims drown during June, July and August.

In 1983 1,800 persons between the

ages of 15-25 drowned; 1,900 persons between 25-44 drowned; 803 children under five years of age drowned (300 of these drowned in and around the home); 4,100 drowned at public swimming areas and from falling into the water; more than three-quarters of the drowning victims were males.

Sixty percent of all drownings happen to victims who never expected to be in the water. And 50 percent of all adult drowning victims are intoxicated at the time of death.

#### Swimming pool activities

Approximately 63 percent of the total U.S. population participates in swimming activities annually.

There were 2,149,000 swimming pools (both public and private) in the U.S. in 1982.

There were 1,729,250 residential in-ground swimming pools in the U.S. in 1982.

In single family residential pools, the 1 to 10-year-old age group represents almost 70 percent of fatalities; children in the 2-year-old age group are the most frequent victims.

## Bedford Water Company transferred



COMMISSIONER DICK BOGLE

Dick Bogle, commissioner-in-charge of the City of Portland Bureau of Water Works, will formally accept the transfer of the Bedford Water Company from President John Veentjer on Thursday, July 11, 1985, at 10:00 a.m. The ceremony will take place in the front yard of Mr. Veentjer's home at 4805 NE 77th.

The Bedford Water Company, bounded by NE 76th to NE 77th, NE Prescott to NE Alberta, was annexed into the City of Portland on June 27, 1985 through the formal approval of

the Portland Metropolitan Area local government boundary commission.

Its 38 customers will save as much as \$40 yearly by receiving water as Portland residents.

When John Veentjer originally moved into the Cully neighborhood, he thought he was buying his home in the City of Portland. He heard there was a water board meeting and thought it his civic responsibility to attend.

That night, over 30 years ago, he was elected to the Bedford Water Cooperative Board of Directors. He has

served as president of the board of directors for the last 26 years. One of the duties of the president is to actually read and replace water meters.

Florence Cole, secretary of the Bedford Water Company Board of Directors for the last 25 years, since taking over the duties from her late husband, says she's relieved she will not have to take any more minutes of the meetings. Veentjer says he couldn't have handled the company without her.

One of the more critical decisions the district has faced in the past years was replacing a water main when the street was improved. The main was too shallow and the two-inch boiler tubing had to be replaced with a galvanized water line. Veentjer had to collect \$126 from each home served by the company. And it wasn't easy. The cost of the water main was \$5,000. However, the bids came in twice that high. A friend of Veentjer's replaced the main at half the cost for the benefit of the 38 users. Veentjer projects today that same line would cost \$15,000.

Commissioner Bogle and Carl Goebel, administrator of the Bureau of Water Works, have directed the transfer of the Bedford Water Company and will study options for upgrading the system to City of Portland standards.

Dick Bogle welcomes the citizens of the Bedford Water Company to the City of Portland.