

News**Feds Open Investigation Into Police Shooting**

Alton Sterling, 37, was shot and killed Tuesday by Baton Rouge police

By **MIKE KUNZELMAN**
Associated Press

BATON ROUGE, La.— The U.S. Justice Department opened a civil rights investigation Wednesday into the videotaped police killing of a Black man who authorities say had a gun as he wrestled with officers on the pavement outside a convenience store.

Alton Sterling, 37, was confronted by police on Tuesday after an anonymous caller said he had threatened someone with a gun outside the store where he was selling homemade CDs, authorities said.

In a cellphone video taken by a community activist and posted online, two officers had Sterling pinned to the ground, and gunfire erupted moments after someone yelled, “He’s got a gun! Gun!”

At a news conference Wednesday, Baton Rouge Police Chief Carl Dabadie Jr. said that Sterling was in fact armed but that there are still questions about what happened.

“Like you, there is a lot that we do not understand. And at this point, like you, I am demanding answers,” Dabadie said, calling the shooting a tragedy.

“I have very serious concerns. The video is disturbing, to say the least

The chief did not disclose the race of the two officers, who have been placed on administrative leave, standard department procedure.

Gov. John Bel Edwards and the U.S. Justice Department announced that its civil rights division would lead the investigation.

“I have very serious concerns. The video is disturbing, to say the least,” Edwards said.

The shooting fueled anger and protests in Baton Rouge, with community leaders and Sterling’s family demanding a federal investigation and the firing of the police chief.

“Mr. Sterling was not reaching for a weapon. He looks like a man that was actually fighting for his life,” said state Rep. Edmond Jordan, an attorney for Sterling’s family.

In Washington, Justice Department spokesman David Jacobs said the FBI and the U.S. attorney’s office in Louisiana will also take part in the investigation.

The Justice Department investigation will look



Nishka Johnson touches a makeshift memorial for Alton Sterling, outside a convenience store in Baton Rouge, La., Wednesday. Sterling was shot and killed by Baton Rouge police outside the store where he was selling CDs.

into whether the officers willfully violated Sterling’s civil rights through the use of unreasonable or excessive force.

Similar investigations, which often take many months, were opened following the deaths of Michael Brown in Ferguson, Missouri, and Eric Garner in New York.

Federal investigators must meet a high legal burden to bring a civil rights prosecution, establishing that an officer knowingly used unreasonable force under the circumstances and did not simply make a mistake or use poor judgment. Many federal probes conclude without criminal charges.

Quinyetta McMillon, the mother of Sterling’s teenage son, trembled as she read a statement outside City Hall, where a few dozen protesters and community leaders had gathered. Her son, Cameron, 15, broke down in tears and was led away as his mother spoke.

She described Sterling as “a man who simply tried to earn a living to take care of his children.

“The individuals involved in his murder took away a man with children who depended upon their daddy on a daily basis,” she said.

Jordan said police confiscated the store’s video surveillance system, but he said the store owner is confident the video shows the entire confrontation and shooting. He said the cellphone video that was posted online “certainly speaks for itself.”

“It’s a horrible thing. It’s a horrible thing to happen to him,” said Sterling’s aunt, Sandra Sterling. “He didn’t deserve that.”

Read the rest of this story at TheSkanner.com

To Go or Not to Go: Visiting the Dog ParkBy **Dr. Jasmine Shanelle Streeter, Veterinarian**
For *The Skanner* News

Yesterday my best friend called inquiring whether he should take his shy, spayed female dog to the dog park. He told me he felt bad that she had never gone, and wondered if she was missing out on the “Six Flags Amusement Park experience” of the doggy world.

Here are some considerations before visiting the dog park.

Some dogs LOVE the dog park while others could care less. Despite what many believe, not all dogs are fans.

My dog Sheba, for ex-



Dr. Jasmine and her dog Sheba

ly or assertive dogs and may exhibit aggressive or submissive behavior when cornered. Dogs with known aggressive tendencies, females in heat and intact (un-neutered) male dogs should not be taken to dog parks, since these encounters may result in fighting or accidental breeding.

“Choose a park with small and large dog play areas or open spaces for dogs to escape if they feel threatened

ample, is more of a “people person” than “dog person” – meaning when she is around other dogs she immediately goes for the humans, leaving the pups disappointed. (She also sits on park benches while at the park and refuses to play catch unless she’s indoors, but that’s another story.)

Age and health are important factors. Dog parks contain a larger density of pathogens and internal/external parasites than other open spaces. Viral transmission such as influenza, parvovirus and distemper can spread quickly with animals making frequent nose-to-nose contact.

Puppies that have not completed their full set of vaccines, dogs that are completely unvaccinated, immunocompromised and sick or injured animals should not be taken to dog parks. Animals recovering from major or minor surgery should not return to the dog park until they are fully recovered to avoid re-injury.

Dog parks with numerous feces files, stagnant water, mud or a stench should always be avoided due to sanitation concerns.

Dogs should be matched in temperament if possible. Shy dogs may not fare well with extremely friend-

It is appropriate to inform another owner that your dog does not want to interact with their dog if you feel your dog is threatened, irritated, frightened or uninterested.

Dogs should also be matched in size. Choose a park with small and large dog play areas or open spaces for dogs to escape if they feel threatened. Placing a Chihuahua in a pen with a young great dane or lab could lead to injuries if the dogs play too roughly or fall. Herding and hunting breeds should be watched closely and discouraged from exhibiting displays of field behavior in the park (herding, nipping or excessive baying), which may disturb, frighten or irritate other dogs.

Overall dog parks serve a purpose: to socialize and exercise pets that may not otherwise get the opportunity. Some dog parks are amazing – others, not so much. Puppy play dates with friendly, familiar animals of known health status are a safe way to enrich and socialize your pet.

At the end of the day, you have to choose what works for you and your pet, and it may be as easy as a walk in the park.

Do you have a pet topic you’d like to learn more about? I’d love to hear from you! Write me at drjasmine@theskanner.com.

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