



John Page/News & Record



Debris was scattered for more than 100 yards around. The passenger door was lodged 50 feet up in a pine tree. The dashboard was wrenched from the Blazer, and various items lay about, including classical music tapes.

'He stopped right in the middle of the street and returned fire'

(From A4)

neuvered around the two civilian cars and Spainhour's Mustang ahead of him and turned left onto New Garden Road. The command car took off behind him, followed by Sturgill and Gentry in the SBI car and Fetter and House in the burgundy Camaro.

Spainhour backed up a short distance, put the Mustang into the wrong gear and slammed again into Debbie Blanton's door. He backed up once more, wheeled around and joined the chase.

Nobles felt a burning sensation under his arm.

"I think I took a hit," he said.

"How bad is it?" Spainhour asked.

"I don't know. I've never been shot before."

Nobles took off his shirt, found little bleeding and no exit wounds. "I'm all right," he said. "Let's go get the son of a bitch."

Fritz drove off slowly, deliberately

In the command car, Davidson heard over the radio that an officer had been shot. He thought it was one of his men. "I've brought one of these boys out here and got him killed," he told himself. He kept looking back. Only when he saw the blue Mustang coming was he able to concentrate on the matters at hand.

All the cars involved in the operation sped off, leaving Dennis shot in his car. A volunteer firefighter who had stopped at the intersection was the first to run to the car to see how he was.

"Just give me a minute," Dennis said. "I want to compose myself."

"303, an ambulance is en route," the dispatcher told Dennis at 2:51. Thirty-eight seconds later, LeClear pulled alongside Dennis' car.

Greensboro officers didn't know who to look for.

"As soon as somebody can, will they give me a little information, please?" Capt. Allen radioed.

The first report the dispatcher got was that the vehicle involved in the shooting was red.

Fritz was driving at about 35 mph. Just beyond the intersection of Fleming Road, where New Garden bears to the right, he swung the Blazer across both lanes and stopped behind a curve. When the pursuing cars rounded the curve, he opened fire.

"He stopped right in the middle of the street and returned fire," Travis radioed from the command car. Four minutes had passed since Dennis had been shot.

The police cars skidded to stops on the right side of the road, and the officers began bailing out. Davidson and Barker were in the back seat of the two-door lead car and couldn't get out. Hunt fired three shots at the Blazer from behind the passenger door.

Fetter jumped out of the Camaro and fired several rounds from a military assault rifle.

Fritz drove away, slowly and deliberately. The police cars kept well back from then on.

"When a man's firing on you with a machine gun," a commanding officer explained later, "you don't run up his tail pipe."

Whenever Fritz slowed or indicated another stop, the airplane warned about it.

Greensboro police were in confusion. First reports sent them in search of a red Camaro and a Mustang — the officers' cars. One Greensboro officer called in that a black Blazer was involved and he was behind it. But he was on the opposite end of New Garden Road. Several cars rushed to help stop the Blazer after it turned south on U.S. 220. It was the wrong one.

At 2:55, Travis radioed again: "This is a black Bronco. The occupant is Fred Klenner, white male, 32." His transmission was weak and hard to understand.

"10-4," the dispatcher said. "It's a white male, 32, name of Red Fleming. It's a black what kind of vehicle?"

"Going to be a black Mustang," another radioed.

At 2:56, an officer called impatiently from the intersection where Dennis was shot: "I want to know if we've got an ambulance for the officer."

Dennis was conscious but in great pain. His vest had stopped the bullet, fired from less than 10 feet away, but his chest and shoulder looked like raw meat, and he was still in shock.

Three minutes later, another officer at the intersection radioed a signal 50 — everything under control. "He's still with us," he said of Dennis.

The Highway Patrol had been alerted about the shooting and was sending cars to look for the assailant. Sturgill radioed from the SBI car that he was in pursuit on New Garden Road, heading for 220.

"Can you get some Greensboro units out that way?" he asked.

"We have several units en route," said the Highway Patrol dispatcher. "Are you behind the Blazer?"

"We're pursuing him at a distance. He's stopping and returning fire. He has an automatic weapon."

"What's the license number on it?"

"It's a black Blazer occupied by a white male, white female and two small children."

The Camaro was in the lead of the caravan of police cars, followed by the command car, the SBI car, a burgundy Chevrolet occupied by Bryant and Carden and the Mustang with the injured Kentucky officers.

Travis' transmissions to the Greensboro dispatcher were now breaking up and inaudible.

Fritz reached U.S. 220 and turned north, firing back at the pursuing cars as he turned.

"Any possibility of getting an HP roadblock on 220 North?" Sturgill radioed.

Two Highway Patrol cars already were headed south on 220 from Rockingham County, but they were well north of Summerfield. Other Highway Patrol cars were coming from U.S. 29 to the east.



Joseph Rodriguez/News & Record

A police sharpshooter covered Susie's apartment in case armed confederates were inside

'It was like the Lord was mad'

What was left of the Blazer was in an overgrown ditch next to a horse pasture on the south side of the road, 75 feet closer to the blast site. The frame was bowed in the middle. The top and sides were gone. The front looked as if it had been peeled forward, angling slightly toward the driver's side. Where the passenger seat had been was a gaping three-foot hole. The driver's seat was intact, a throne in the wreckage. The driver's door hung askew.

In the back of the wreckage lay John and Jim, with one of the chows, Maizie, dead between them. Dan Davidson walked over to look at the van, then turned away. It was his worst moment in 29 years of law enforcement.

Davidson had come to like Tom Lynch, called him Doc, and sympathized with his efforts to spend more time with his boys. That morning, he had remarked to another detective, "Well, it looks like ol' Doc might be able to come and get his boys for good pretty soon." He looked forward to passing on the good news.

Now he would have to call with another message.

Debris was scattered for more than 100 yards around. The passenger door was lodged 50 feet up in a pine tree. A small arsenal lay about. The Uzi was found with a shell jammed in the chamber. Propped against a utility pole was a cocked 9-mm pistol with a shell in the chamber. Two Ithaca lightweight shotguns were found, along with a .45-caliber semi-automatic pistol, a .308-caliber assault rifle with a bipod and a flare gun. Ammunition was everywhere, including KTW armor-piercing shells.

There were gas masks, tarps, tools, a big wood-cutting saw, extra boots, C-rations, climbing rope, several kinds of knives, a machete, brass knuckles, handcuffs, choke wires, martial arts weapons, holsters, bandoleers, smoke grenades, flares, waterproof matches, a portable water treatment unit and "The Pocket Black Book," a guide to survival.

A plastic sandwich bag holding a thin stack of \$100 bills was concealed in a pack.

Amidst all this were tapes of classical music, parts of a syllabus from a business class, some of Susie's homework and a children's book: "No Monsters In The Closet."

In the woods was a duffle bag stuffed with vitamins.

Fritz's Rolex watch was stopped at 3:08. He had a knife on his belt and Susie's .25-caliber Browning pistol in his hip pocket.

On his right hand he wore a gold ring in the shape of a horseshoe with a lightning bolt across it, on his left hand a gold wedding band. Around his neck was a gold chain with a religious medalion. "AGLA," was the inscription on one side, "IVA IANA AOY JEVA," on the other. In his right front pocket were rosary beads and a cross on a gold chain.

Susie wore a Rolex watch and a gold ring with three dark stones on her left hand.

Around her neck were a gold chain with a cross and a scapular, a string with two small cloth patches bearing prayers. On one was a pledge of salvation, on the other a plea for a release from purgatory. The boys also wore these scapulars. All three had been carrying rosary beads.

Within minutes of the bomb blast, the sky to the north and west turned dark and angry. The storm came quickly and with an intense ferocity. Wind bent the trees. Lightning struck in the woods 200 yards away. The officers and emergency people swarming over the area took cover. Rain came in torrents. Hail the size of marbles beat down on the bodies where they lay.

And when it had passed, steam rose from the roadbed and hovered eerily.

"It was like the Lord was mad," Dan Davidson said later. "Like he was real mad."

'I have never harmed anyone'

Back at Friendly Hills, Susie's apartment building was evacuated and a wide area roped off. The bomb squad was called out. Officers got search warrants. At 9:50 p.m., they carefully broke out the front window and climbed inside.

On the cluttered table, near an open edition of that day's New York Times, they found four notes. All were on the stationery of Dr. Fred R. Klenner of Reidsville, but his name and address had been scratched through. Three were signed "Fred R. Klenner Jr."

"This is to certify that my friend Ian Perkins was in no way involved in any wrongdoings of any kind," the first note said. "He was with me on a camping trip to Peaks of Otter on the weekend of May 18th and to the best of his certain knowledge in training for a possible career in covert operations."

"The firearms in this apartment and in the Blazer were the property of Fred R. Klenner Sr. and are the property of Annie Sharp Klenner, as are the computer, TV, electronics equipment, weight machines and camping gear," the second note said.

"I have in my life never physically harmed anyone as in taking human life," the third note said. "I am innocent of any accusations that have come to my attention and fear an elaborate frame. I have spent my life in the service of my God, my country and my family."

The fourth was the shortest: "Mother, I love you now and always. Your Fritz."

BITTER BLOOD

A Genealogy of Murder

Sunday: The Dying Begins — Both murder scenes suggested robbery. Police suspected professionals. Family members suspected one of their own.

Monday: His Father's Son — Fritz Klenner's proud Prussian papa taught him to love guns, hate commies, charm women and expect Armageddon.

Tuesday: Susie Q — Susie Lynch lived a fairy-tale youth: May Queen at 5, high school princess, fraternity sweetheart.

Wednesday: The Gathering Storm — Fritz was ready for the world to fall apart, but not for his father to die.

Thursday: Victims and Survivors — As the family arranged funerals, the detectives analyzed alibis.

Friday: A Spy Gets Spooked — Ian Perkins dreamed of joining the CIA. He thought he had passed the first test until the police came calling.

Today: The Bloody End — A shootout, a chase, an explosion — now nine people were dead.

Sunday: The Unraveling — The family was devastated, the community captivated. One by one, the bizarre details surfaced.