

# Did Ruby kill Oswald?

Area brother says no, but death on paramedics

By Ralph R. Echlinaw  
staff writer

Lee Harvey Oswald wasn't killed by Jack Ruby, but rather by confused medics who thought he had a seizure, according to West Bloomfield resident Earl Ruby, Jack's brother.

Last year, Earl Ruby said, a fellow who interned at Parkland Hospital in Dallas when Oswald was shot said, "They thought (Oswald) had a heart attack, there was so much commotion at the police station. The medics were pumping his chest to try and pump some oxygen into his lungs. Instead, not knowing he'd been shot, they were pumping blood into his lungs. That's what actually killed him."

Ruby, 76, also asserts that his brother shot into Oswald's stomach

on Nov. 24, 1963, intending to injure President John Kennedy's alleged assassin. "He wanted (Oswald) to suffer," Ruby said. "That's what I told me. He could have shot him in the chest. He was right in front of him. You don't shoot someone in the stomach if you want to kill him. Most people live through that."

Oswald didn't Jack Ruby, who owned two Dallas night clubs, was tried for murder and convicted. His conviction was overturned and Ruby died Jan. 3, 1967, in the same hospital where Kennedy and Oswald were taken. Ruby had been awaiting a second trial.

SINCE THEN Kennedy assassination conspiracy stories have multiplied almost as fast as Elvis impersonators, notwithstanding government studies that said Oswald and Ruby

acted on their own.

But, a movie set for release last year called "Ruby" takes a conspiracy angle. "They need me (for my help)," Earl said. "I know why, because it's got every angle and they knew I'd be interested. How could (government) cover it up? There are thousands of people involved. It's a cover-up. That's fool-

ish," his brother's death, Earl Ruby has granted interview after interview bent on debunking the conspiracy theory. He said it was not a plan for Jack to hang around the police station, given a great respect for cops that was returned in full, particularly after Jack helped a police officer defend himself against the beatniks.

That policeman told the media

that Jack fought like a tiger to help him," Earl said. "That's why he was like an honorary policeman in Dallas. And that's one of the reasons the policeman at the top of the ramp let him walk down the ramp (to where Oswald would appear). He denied it later, of course, but I'm sure he knew my brother."

EARL RUBY also points to Jack's fiery, impulsive, often violent disposition, and claims a smirk on Oswald's face was all the impetus Jack needed to reach for the 38-caliber Colt Cobra revolver he often pocketed when carrying large sums of money. "Jack told me he saw Oswald with a smirk on his face, so he pulled out the gun and shot him," Earl Ruby said.

Growing up in 1930s Chicago, Jack Ruby was known for slugging anyone who disparaged then-president Franklin Roosevelt, a New York Times article of Nov. 25, 1963, said. Earl Ruby said Jack was "really impulsive. He had more fights than most fighters. He was always involved in a fight."

Earl learned how to fight, too, in court that is. "I have about \$100,000 invested in this thing from the very beginning," he said. "The first trial cost me over \$60,000. I paid for all kinds of briefs and copies and court reporters. I've got a list of everything. Airplanes for the doctors and psychiatrists and the hotel bill, the food bill and the fee. Unbelievable. What was I going to do (defense attorney Melvin Belli said, "Pay it, and I paid it.")

Now Earl Ruby is ready to pay again. After the recent test of his small suitcase containing telegrams



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

West Bloomfield resident Earl Ruby sits with a big picture of his brother Jack shooting Lee Harvey Oswald.

and checks signed by Jack, he's offering \$1,000 for its return, no questions asked. The signatures, he estimated, are worth \$50,000 to a collector. Signature dealers across the country have been alerted, Earl said, making it nearly impossible for the thief to sell the suitcase's contents. "I contacted some of the people

who worked here (last summer) and they all denied knowing anything about it," Earl said. "My wife and I searched this house several times over, in every corner and nook you could think of. I can't believe it. I was going to leave the stuff to my children and perhaps my grandchildren."

## Gun for sale . . . used once

By Ralph R. Echlinaw  
staff writer

FOR SALE: 1960s vintage .38-caliber Colt Cobra revolver, used once, very accurate at close range. Ask for Earl.

Although he probably won't put an ad like that in paper, Earl Ruby, 76, of West Bloomfield Township, is very serious about selling the gun his older brother used to shoot Lee Harvey Oswald on Nov. 24, 1963, in Dallas.

Since Jack Ruby died early in 1967, the battle has raged over who owns the gun he made famous by shooting President John Kennedy's assassin. Until recently, it was in the

possession of Jules Mayer, an attorney who was executor of Ruby's estate. Mayer has tried to sell the gun, claiming offers as high as \$100,000, according to a Newsweek article of Oct. 22, 1990.

Besides the Colt, Ruby's estate consists of the Neiman-Marcus shirt, alligator belt and Cavanaugh hat Ruby was wearing when he shot Oswald. Ruby also left behind a ring, a watch, two pairs of swim trunks, a shower cap and a jock strap. All that stuff rests in a safety deposit box on the east side of Dallas. Ruby's estate is offering the gun for sale in his trial. Earl saw no reason to stop spending after Jack's death. He sued Mayer five times for possession of the gun and everything else in the safety deposit box, finally winning last year.

But as the new administrator of Ruby's estate, Earl is responsible to the Internal Revenue Service for what it says Jack owed the government when he died. (The debt has grown to \$68,000.) "I think we can settle for, at most, half of that," Earl said, but then there's an attorney waiting for his cut, too. Earl said he has a third of the profit.

Everything he can sell, he said, "especially to the attorney. We have to sell the gun, and I'm looking for an offer."

He's in the phone book.

Earl said he saw Kresae laying out ground in a pool of blood, and Vortman slumped across the passenger side of her car. "I kept talking to him — he had a pulse, he was breathing," she added. "But sometimes talking to a dead person keeps them alive. It appeared that Vortman had been shot at least twice through the left side of her chest, "near or through the heart," she added.

FARMINGTON HILLS Fire Department emergency medical technician Tom Mitchell, Norbert Lepore and Michael Kish, were first to arrive on the scene. Mitchell, also a Green Hill Apartments resident, said rescuers felt a very slight pulse on Vortman at the scene, but that she was dead on arrival at Botsford Hospital. The man "tried to keep us down, getting the life support tube down his throat," Mitchell said. "He knew we were trying to save him."

Police conducted searches Thursday night on Kresae's car parked at Green Hill, his apartment and on a second car, the former trooper owned, Nebus said.

He accused the search warrants to show if there was evidence of premeditation, deliberation or motive, Nebus said. "We did seize some evidence related to this case," but police could not release details of the evidence collected, according to the warrants, until au-

thorized by the courts. Police are continuing their investigation.

The Oakland County Medical Examiner released Vortman's body Friday to McCabe Funeral Home in Farmington Hills. Funeral services will be in Kalamazoo, where she once worked as a special deputy for Kalamazoo County.

VORTMAN JOINED the state police in February 1977. Until six to eight months ago when she was assigned to the Ypsilanti Post, Vortman worked out of Detroit Metropolitan Airport. She worked in general investigations, airline fraud and VIP security, Kregelka said. At the Ypsilanti Post, Vortman

worked in criminal sexual conduct cases, fraud and embezzlement. She also was recently assigned to start up a pawn shop detail in conjunction with Washtenaw County.

"She was doing a great job and she loved it," Kregelka said. "We are all going to miss her."

## Fellow troopers stunned by Hills woman's slaying

Vortman, the mother of two grown children, was about to drive to Lansing where she was working on a case with Washtenaw County and New York City ties when she was shot, Kregelka said.

She was pronounced dead at Botsford General Hospital of multiple gun wounds to her upper torso at 7:50 a.m. Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer said, Kresae, who was conscious when emergency medical personnel arrived, remained in critical condition in Botsford Friday.

According to witnesses at the scene, Kresae, who had a long-time romantic relationship with Vortman, apparently parked his car away from Vortman's building, but close enough to see her leave for work and confront her.

The victim thought of him as an ex-boyfriend, but still as an acquaintance, Nebus said. Vortman and Kresae played on the same volleyball team.

WITNESSES HEARD Kresae shouting at Vortman before he opened fire into the side driver's window of her car, where she was sitting. Vortman did not roll down the window when Kresae tried to talk with her.

While Vortman's roommate, George Ann Stom watched, Kresae fired multiple shots into the car window at Vortman.

"She was in fear of him," Nebus

**'This is sad. It is so senseless and tragic. Joe was the last person I would think would do something like that. It is sad for both families.'**

— Garry Kregelka  
Ypsilanti post commander

said. "They (Vortman and Stom) were in fear because the prior night he kept calling her and pushing the door buzzer."

The following morning, Vortman and Stom looked out the door and saw their apartment to see if Kresae remained there through the night, Nebus said.

When Vortman and Stom didn't see him, they left their building. "Her roommate saw him approach the car," Nebus said. Kresae was seen coming from behind some nearby dumpsters and a lightly wooded area.

Green Hill resident and former Karen Peper was working on her master's thesis in her nearby apartment when she heard the shots.

"I knew they were shots, and I ran out to help," she said. "I saw her roommate in the doorway screaming and she pointed to the carports."

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## 'Could happen anywhere'

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"But domestic things like this can happen anywhere," she added.

Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer agreed. "You have a population growing here. Domestic situations will occur. It's something that's unfortunate."

Vortman's murder is the third in

the city this year:

• A Livonia woman, murdered in Detroit, also was found dead in field on Goldsmith road of Eight Mile, in February.

• On May 31, two Detroit residents were shot at a house on Inkster Road, near Eight Mile.

• On July 3, a man was shot and

killed in the apartment he shared with his roommate at Newport Green Apartments on Eight Mile.

All of these homicides have been between people who are acquainted, Dwyer said. "These are not random-type murders. These are homicides between people who had some kind of conflict."

Druggies and drug paraphernalia were found in the man's apartment, police said in those items did not play a role in his death.

TRAFFIC ASSAULT

A 21-year-old Detroit woman said she was assaulted then followed after a traffic altercation at 12 Mile and Orchard Lake Road the morning of Sept. 11.

According to a Farmington Hills police report, the woman drove past the man whose car was stalled in the northbound left lane of Orchard Lake Road south of 12 Mile. He then got out, yelled at her and kicked her car.

The man followed her to work, parked just west of her building, got out and walked around her car, then

Police continue to investigate, taking prints from the 32-caliber weapon, but Lauffoff said the department does not expect to find any evidence of crime other than suicide. The victim had apparently been drinking several days when discovered.

KIDNAP ATTEMPT

A man tried to take a baby from a party on Ambeth Street Sept. 1, but the attempt was thwarted by the baby's mother who snatched the child from his arms, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

The mother was attending the party when she heard the owner of the house shouting to a strange man not to leave with the woman's one-year-old. She ran after the man who, at first refused to give back the baby. She then grabbed her daughter, and the man left in an older grey van which was occupied with the engine running.

Police have no suspects.

## police/fire calls

Listed below are some of the Farmington-area police incidents, fire calls and court cases reported during the past week:

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