

Police hunt for clues in baffling shooting

Police continue to question friends, associates and family members in an attempt to trace the steps of 22-year-old Vertis Christopher Dickson took before his death by shooting Sunday in Southfield.

Dickson's body was discovered around 8:45 p.m. in the upstairs apartment he shared with a friend in the Twyckingham Apartment complex on 12 Mile, west of Lahser. Police spokesman L.A. Moore said his apartment mate told him he found the body when he returned from work.

The Oakland County medical examiner's office said Dickson died from "gunshot wounds to the chest and abdomen." An autopsy was conducted Monday.

At present, police have no suspects in the slaying. "We're working on the belief that he was killed by someone he knew and that robbery was not the motive," Moore said. "There was no sign of forced entry into the apartment and we've found no indication of a robbery. It's possible that something was taken that we don't know about, but the apartment wasn't ransacked and we don't know of anything

that's missing."

Dickson's body was found in his bed covered by a quilt. Police refused to reveal how the victim was dressed and the caliber and type of gun used in order to protect the investigation.

"What we're focusing on right now is retracing the victim's steps before he was killed — where he may have been and who he was with and who saw him. We don't even know if he left the apartment."

The crime was reported to police at 8:57 p.m. The victim was pronounced dead at the scene by Southfield paramedics.

Dickson's death is the second murder reported in Southfield this year.

The first one was on March 21 when Rommel Sanders shot and killed former football star Aaron Roberts in a confrontation at the traffic light at 10 Mile and the Northwestern service drive. Roberts and Sanders had worked together. Sanders was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to mandatory life in prison for the crime.

Families urged to set fitness goals

October is Family Health Month and Weight Watchers is urging American families to set personal goals and adopt a more healthy lifestyle through proper diet, weight control and regular activity.

"In 1990, the U.S. government established health objectives for all Americans, called Healthy People 2000," said Dr. George Christakis, medical director for Weight Watchers International. "One key objective is to reduce

the proportion of our population that is overweight."

"In recent years, we've discovered that obesity is a risk factor in nearly every major chronic disease. The good news is that this is one risk factor that can be controlled through changes in diet and lifestyle," Christakis said.

However, American families may need help in reaching this objective and controlling their weight. According to a national survey sponsored by Weight

Watchers, while nearly two-thirds of Americans know they need to pay more attention to nutrition, and half believe they are overweight by an average of 23 pounds, they admit they need

more practical knowledge to develop healthier eating habits.

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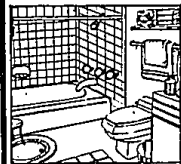
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