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## National

# New Orleans apartment fire kills 5

**NEW ORLEANS** — Four children and one adult were killed by a blaze that gutted a century-old apartment house, forcing as many as 30 residents to jump from upper story windows.

Three bodies were recovered from rubble in the building Sunday morning, and fire officials later said two children listed as missing had been confirmed dead.

Fire officials said Sunday afternoon they still had not determined the cause of the blaze.

Identities of the dead were not available, but fire officials said the victims included four children apparently being cared for by an aunt. The fifth victim was believed to be the aunt.

"I know how you feel, but I'm going to level with you," Fire Superintendent William McCrossen told the children's father, Norwood Jackson. "No human being could have survived up there. I'm sorry."

Seven people were injured jumping from second- and third-floor windows in the converted orphanage located in a predominantly black lower-middle income area.

The injured were taken to Charity Hospital. A spokeswoman said of the victims brought there, the most serious injury was a broken pelvis.

Firefighters arriving on the scene shortly after 11 p.m. Saturday were confronted by flames bursting from the building's upper floor and through the roof. The fire grew to a sixth alarm within 30 minutes and was battled by 125 firefighters for three hours.

Rescuers searching for victims were called out of the building during the night because of extensive damage to the structure's third floor, McCrossen said. Search efforts resumed at daybreak Sunday.

One witness to the fire said she saw a man, his clothes apparently aflame, jump out of the building. Others reported heroic rescues by neighbors, who braved smoke and flame to repeatedly enter the building and lead dazed survivors to safety.

Reginald Ringo said he joined other bystanders entering the building to evacuate residents, and said he saw one woman trapped in the flames.

"I saw a lady up through some smoke in the middle of the

hall (on the third floor) but I couldn't get to her," he said. "The smoke ran me down the stairs and that's the last I heard of her."

Driving rain and hail hampered firefighters' efforts, McCrossen said the weather did not contribute to fatalities.

"I can't recall a combination of things going against me like they did last night," McCrossen said. "The rain was a great hinderance. It pushed the smoke down to the ground. But the major factor in this fire was the delay alarm."

Joanne Hardin, who lives in the predominantly black lower-middle income neighborhood, said the fire spread rapidly, engulfing the top two floors.

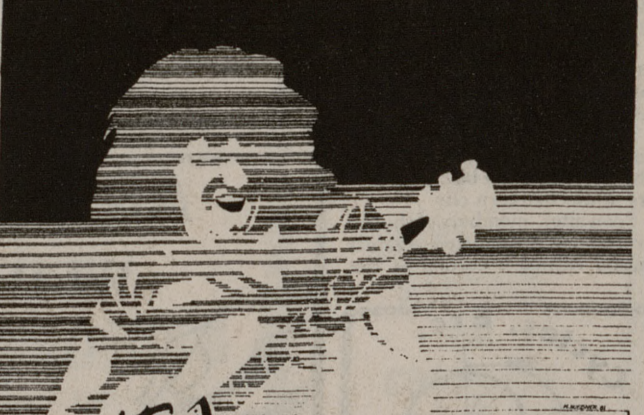
"The fire was just shooting every which way," Hardin said. "People were screaming from those third-floor windows. They were screaming for help."

Jacqueline Winchester, who lives next door, said the apparently obstructed stairwells, cutting off upper-story residents from escape.

## Vigilantes say arrests won't stop them

**ATLANTA** — Vigilantes patrolling a black neighborhood to prevent further child killings said Saturday the arrests of three from their group this week on weapons charges will not deter them from carrying guns.

"I'll carry it again," said Jerome Gibbs, who Saturday became the



third vigilante arrested for carrying a gun in the Techwood Homes housing project. Gibbs, wearing a pistol strapped in a holster, was arrested moments after he joined the group.

Chimurenga Jenga, an organizer of the group and one of two men arrested for carrying weapons Friday, said, "We'll carry one gun a day. If they arrest people every day, then we'll all go to jail."

"The police have put themselves on the side of the child killer at this point," Jenga continued. "While they are here arresting us, the child killer is roaming the city."

Jenga, Gibbs and Gene Ferguson all face hearings Monday on charges of carrying weapons in a public place.

Meanwhile, about 400 volunteers searched for clues to the child killers Saturday but appar-

ently found only animal bones. Tracking dogs were used in the search, the 23rd such weekend effort aimed at trying to crack a 20-month period in which 20 Atlanta black children have been slain. Two others are officially listed as missing.

Following Gibbs' arrest Saturday, about 20 members of the citizens' patrol armed with baseball bats staged a sit-in around Deputy Police Chief Eldrin Bell's car, refusing to let him leave the scene. Bell left his car and went to another officer's auto, but the vigilantes followed and surrounded it also.

When they refused to move, police tried to force them away but several vigilantes then laid under the car. Bell was later picked up by a third police car.

Jenga showed police a copy of Section 26-2903 of the Georgia

Criminal Code which says a citizen can carry a gun without license as long as the weapon is fully exposed.

Before leaving, Bell said he would "look into" Jenga's claims, but he and the other men were arrested without incident.

The group continued to stage sit-ins around the police car and not move until Gibbs was turned from jail by police. Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson has condemned the vigilante effort, saying the police can best handle law enforcement.

After Gibbs returned, the group resumed its patrol of the North Atlanta neighborhood, marking the second night of vigilante watch.

On Friday night, some 35 vigilantes patrolled the area. "It's the quietest night I've ever seen out here," said Israel Green, president of the Techwood Homes Association.

Man listed as critical after dive

**TRUTH OR CONSEQUENCES, N.M.** — An Army officer whose heartbeat could not be detected for almost 45 minutes after being found in a lake was listed in critical condition Sunday.

Capt. Ron Butterman, who was scuba diving in Elephant Butte Lake in south central New Mexico, Saturday was found floating there with his mask full of water.

He was revived 45 minutes later by rescuers who said they couldn't find a heartbeat for most of the time.

The water temperature at the lake, where Butterman was scuba diving with a companion, was chilly 42 degrees, a factor that may have helped rescuers revive him.

Under normal conditions, about five minutes is the longest person can be expected to survive the lack of a heartbeat, but officials said resuscitation efforts are continued longer for cold water victims because the temperature tends to protect organs against deterioration.

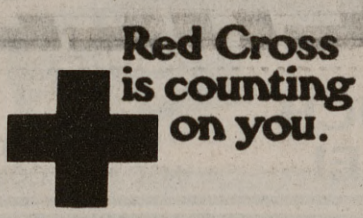
Physicians at a local hospital managed to raise a faint heartbeat by electrical stimulation of the heart. Butterman was then transferred to the army hospital at Fort Bliss, Texas.

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