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Maryland standoff continues, 4 killed

DUNDALK, Md. (AP) — A murder suspect holding three people hostage for a third day repeatedly fired bursts of gunfire out a window at police Sunday while breaking off his telephone contact with negotiators, officials said.

Authorities tried to avoid agitating the suspect, who was believed to be watching the ordeal on television. Joseph Palczynski had been on the run since March 7, when police say he kidnapped his girlfriend, Tracy Whitehead, and killed the couple she was staying with and a neighbor. A fourth person was killed and a boy was wounded when Palczynski allegedly carjacked a vehicle, police said.

Whitehead escaped unharmed; police would not disclose her whereabouts. Palczynski later fled to Virginia, where he stole guns and forced a man to drive him back to Baltimore County.

The five bursts of gunfire Sunday morning were the first signs of activity since Palczynski took Whitehead's mother and two others hostage Friday night. No injuries were reported and police did not return his fire.

Palczynski stopped talking with negotiators for about an hour and a half Sunday morning, and police moved in with an armored vehicle and a bullhorn to urge him to resume communications.

"Joby, we need you to pick up the phone," an officer said over the loudspeaker, using Palczynski's nickname. "Come on Joby, pick up the phone."

Palczynski responded with shots, and the armored vehicle backed away. He soon resumed talks, but then fired more shots, spokesman Bill Toohy said.

"Our main strategy is patience, patience, patience," Toohy said. After Palczynski returned to the area from Virginia, police searched the area for more than a week. On Friday, he broke into a house, tied up the occupants and stole three guns.

He then shot his way into the home of Whitehead's mother, Lynn Whitehead. Relatives said he was holding Lynn Whitehead; her boyfriend, Andy McCord; and 12-year-old Brad McCord.

Police refused to characterize their negotiations with Palczynski but confirmed that a psychiatrist was helping negotiators. Police have said Palczynski has bipolar disorder, often called manic-depression, which causes extreme mood swings. The 31-year-old unemployed electrician also has a history of convictions for assault and battery. Days before the killings, he was charged with assaulting Whitehead but was released on \$7,500 bail.

In 1992, he kept police in Idaho at bay for 16 hours following a domestic violence complaint by a girlfriend. He was finally forced out with tear gas.

Relatives and friends say Palczynski has said that he would shoot himself or make police shoot him rather than go back to prison.

Police had not allowed anyone in or out of the blue collar suburb east of Baltimore since the standoff began.

One woman who lives within view of the back of the house where the hostages were being held made a run for it with her 11-year-old son and 10-month-old baby Sunday morning after she heard the shots.

"I've been there since Friday," said an exhausted and distraught Anna Day. "I don't have anything. I need formula. I need bottles. I need diapers."

"I'm scared to leave the kids. We've been sleeping on the floor," she said. Police urged residents to stay inside where it was safe.

"We're asking people not to make a break. It is dangerous to go out on the street," Toohy said.

Throughout the ordeal, friends and relatives called television stations to urge Palczynski to surrender.

"Everybody cares about you. We love you very much," said Ron Messman, who said he has been a friend of Palczynski since high school. "You need to clear your mind, put down your weapons, let the hostages go. It's time to end this, buddy. You need to do it peacefully, and you need to do it quickly."

"We're asking people not to make a break. It's dangerous to go out on the street."

— Bill Toohy
police spokesperson

Girl hospitalized after cattle truck accident

ALBANY, Texas (AP) — A 9-year-old Oklahoma girl remained hospitalized in serious condition Saturday after being pinned in the doorway of a restaurant by an overturned truck loaded with cattle.

Ann Younger, of Hydro, Okla., had just left The Hunters Inn in Albany Friday afternoon, but went back inside to tip the waitress when a truck overturned on the road in front of the business and slid into the entrance.

The girl was trapped 20 minutes while crews worked to pry her free. She was listed in serious condition Friday evening at Hendrick Medical Center in Abilene.

Department of Public Safety Trooper Xavier Perez and hospital staff said both of Younger's legs were crushed in the accident. Both of her femurs were broken, and the girl was in surgery for about five hours.

Doctors had feared they would have to amputate her left leg, but surgery restored her blood flow.

Perez said the accident was caused by the truck driver, Stacey Wayne James, "going a little fast for

"I guess these things happen. I'd give anything to be in that little girl's place."

— Stacey Wayne James
driver of overturned truck

this curve. The trailer tilted on its side and the driver was unable to regain control." A preliminary report says the truck was traveling

"at an unsafe speed." That doesn't necessarily mean the truck was speeding on the 35 mph road, Perez said.

A one-ton truck in the parking lot was pushed 6 or 7 feet, and the building was pushed off its foundation, Perez said.

James, 29, of Wichita Falls, and his 12-year-old son were not seriously injured. The truck was loaded with 100 head of cattle. Six died in the accident.

"I guess these things can happen. I'd give anything to take that little girl's place," James said.

Owner Marvin Presley said cattle began storming into his restaurant through a hole in the trailer. "I jumped into the trailer to try to keep them from stepping on her. It was terrible," he told the *Abilene Reporter-News*.

Police said the building has been hit at least three times over the years by vehicles that failed to negotiate the curve on U.S. Highway 180, which serves as the main street through Albany.

News in Brief

Tourist train halts for accident injury

FORT WORTH (AP) — The Tarrantula tourist train, which crashed into a tanker train last week, has temporarily suspended service while federal officials investigate the accident, according to general manager Mike Schillace.

Service from Grapevine to the historic Stockyards district in Fort Worth will resume March 28, Schillace said. But he declined to explain why an executive was at the controls of the train, what the man's position is and why injured passengers have not been contacted.

At least 14 of the 148 passengers received treatment for minor injuries at local hospitals after Wednesday's collision just outside the Stockyards.

Dennis E. Larson, an attorney who has previously been described as the train's general manager, was at the engine's controls, federal officials said. It was not known if Larson is licensed to operate a locomotive.

The Tarrantula resumed operations Thursday, the day after the collision and derailment, then shut down Friday, Schillace said. The Texas Star Clipper dinner train is also discontinuing operation during the investigation, he said.

Some passengers told the newspaper they were upset they hadn't been contacted by the train operators.

Ex-Black Panther remains in hiding

ATLANTA (AP) — After search-

ing for three days, police and federal agents on Sunday still had not found a former Black Panther connected with the shooting of two deputies.

Police have said sympathetic admirers may be hiding H. Rap Brown, now known as Jamil Abdullah Al-Amin. Authorities said they believe Al-Amin has left Georgia.

As the deputies approached a black Mercedes-Benz, the driver got out and started shooting a high-powered assault rifle.

Fraternity house blaze kills two

BLOOMSBURG, Pa. (AP) — A fire in an off-campus fraternity house killed two people early Sunday, while others jumped to safety in their underwear from a second-story window.

The privately owned Tau Kappa Epsilon house, two blocks from the Bloomsburg University campus, was destroyed in the 6 a.m. blaze. Two bodies were recovered from the wreckage, but they were not immediately identified.

Two students escaped by jumping from a second-story window in their underwear, and a third fled out the front door, police said. All reported awakening and finding heavy smoke in the building; one reported hearing a smoke alarm.

Authorities did not immediately know how many people were in the house, Hollister said.

Two adjacent townhouses were also damaged, but no one in those structures was injured. The cause of the fire was under investigation.

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