

## Montréal Town Hall Meeting-Musalo Investigation

**Date: April 5, 2006**

Present: Rob Nichols, Sergeant Dean Spurr, Montréal Security Nino Pipitone, Sergeant Ron Breaux, Detective Garrison, Detective Green, Deputy Mastinau, Jeff Madsen

Absent: Keith Walsch

Meeting was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

**Mr. Rob Nichols:** Introduction/Good Afternoon

*Purpose:* To give an update from the Sheriff department on the status of the investigation and to give the members the opportunity to ask the detectives questions. Discuss the current Montreux security policy; discuss possible ways to make ways to make Montreux a safer community. We would like to keep the meeting/situation as positive as possible. Keep in mind we have no idea how intruder got into Montreux at this point. We appreciate your support and thank you. We are trying to keep this out of press as there is no benefit to having them sensationalize this tragic event. Try to keep meeting short as a press conference is scheduled at 5:30.

We want to keep the story in the press as factual as possible and ask that there only be one spokesperson for Montreux (Rob Nichols).

*Agenda:* We would like to start with Sergeant Spurr to give an update and then to Detectives Garrison and Green. Then we will have Q & A followed by Nino with security and more Q & A.

**Sgt. Spurr:** *Overview of Investigation*

16-18 detectives, Washoe County Sheriff's office, Secret Service, FBI, Reno Police Department, Sparks Police Department, Squat team. The FBI is flying people in and doing whatever it takes to solve this case. Putting in 14-16 hour days. Forensic lab lots of money to process evidence.

Updates will be given on the investigation as we have it. More meetings 1-2 weeks continue this. You will be the first to know.

Introduce officers Keith Walsch, Jeff Madsen, Sgt. Ron Breaux.

There are a higher number of officers due to investigation/concern.

Squat members in Galena area Friday-Monday 24 hrs for prowler concerns.

Two investigators: **Lead-Garrison, Co-case agent Green**

**Detective Garrison:** Information developed is secret, not released due to possibility of leaked information hampering investigation.

Not a lot of leads. Meet with family on a regular basis. No signs of forced entry. Both victims shot. Don't know if came in a vehicle, hopped the fence or already in the area.

**Detective Green:** Need information from woman who observed footprints last Saturday. Please call with information. Photographs needed to collect data to build case. FBI on board because they have an index of every shoe made to help with case. Please call if you see something or notify security.

*Member questions, **Detective Garrison** answers*

Member Q: When was the act committed?

Answer: Musalos last seen 3:00 pm retrieving mail Monday afternoon. Got the call at 7:20 pm Tuesday night.

Member Q: Can forensics tell the time of death?

Answer: Time last alive/time discovered is what we have, cannot give exact time of death.

Member Q: What about phone records?

Answer: Currently being investigated.

Member Q: Were items taken specific to that house?

Answer: Yes specific to house.

Member Q: What about DNA evidence? Was it a struggle at time of death?

Answer: DNA works like fingerprints, DNA transfer could be as simple as sweat. No struggle.

Member Q: Did Musalos own any firearms?

Answer: No. No firearms with any family members.

Member Q: Were doors/windows all locked that night?

Answer: Cannot disclose this information.

Member Q: Has the FBI developed a profile of the perpetrator?

Answer: Not yet but met with FBI and they are working on this.

*Member questions, **Detective Green** answers*

Member Q: Have most of the prowlers been in the Piney creek Road area? Is there Security in that area?

Answer: The SWAT team focus is inside and outside of the Montreux area. Neighborhood watch. Keep doors locked and house secure.

Member Q: It said 2 gun shots. Did anyone hear it at night because noise travels and I would think you would be able to hear gunshots in a house.

Answer: Theory is not ruled out but weapon could have been silent.

Member Q: Is it a good idea for us to keep off the common areas where our footprints could be traced?

Answer: Good idea to eliminate footprints but not asking you to stay off all areas as this would be logistically difficult.

Member Q: Are you checking with construction workers here? I had some cushions stolen this summer and am concerned they are lingering around at lunch or after work.

Answer: Yes working on this issue.

Member Q: Do you have any suspects at all?  
Answer: Not ready to discuss yet. We have leads and are talking to many people.

Member Q: Was there information of someone they knew who came to visit?  
Answer: No information of people admitted to gate.

Member Q: Was there an alarm violation?  
Answer: No.

Member Q: Did they have an alarm? Was it operable?  
Answer: Yes had a residential alarm, yes functioning.

Member Q: Can you discuss if the phone lines were cut.  
Answer: No.

Member Q: What is the procedure if someone wants to talk to you?  
Answer: We have a direct line to the detective division and a secret witness number. **Non emergency number is 785-4628.**

Member Q: I am concerned about the footprints. How likely is it to be the prowler?  
Does it fit the profile?  
Answer: Anything is possible at this point. We're not ruling anything out and doing research on this.

Member Q: Did the nature of the items justify the act or unrelated?  
Answer: Don't want to get into this, don't want to mislead.

Member Q: Do you believe you will have this solved with information you have?  
Answer: Yes I believe we will have solution.

Member Q: Do you have any advice for homeowners?  
Answer: Be aware and not lulled into a sense of complete security.

Member Q: 7/8/9 months ago cars were broken into. How likely is this connected? Are you aware of this case?  
Answer: There have been vehicle burglaries and a gun stolen out of a car. We arrested the man. There is no connection at this point.  
We have a computerized system and have gone back 1 year to establish patterns and look at acts in this area.

Member Q: There are rumors of kids doing the burglaries. Is this true?  
Answer: Just take it seriously.

Member Q: Can you tell us if you are close to making an arrest?  
Answer: At this point we can't say but we do have people we are interested in.

Member Q: They were shot. Can you elaborate?  
Answer: No but we can say that the cause of death was a shot.

Member Q: Residents said they were shot in bed. Is this true?  
Answer: We cannot say now.

Member Q: Can you confirm it was one person?  
Answer: Cannot confirm at this point.

Member Q: How specific evidence do you want? If my garage door was open when I came home the other day? Is this information you want?  
Answer: Yes anything and everything we want.

Member Q: In your professional opinion, was it random versus intentional?  
Answer: Can not say one way or the other.

Member Q: There was a couple up at the lake that was also killed and nothing uncovered. Can you tell us more?  
Answer: This is true. It happened in 1994. There has been a civil judgment against the son of the couple, but no prosecution.

Member Q: What about the body found at the Saddlehorn Park?  
Answer: Suspect not prosecuted but in prison on other charges.

Member Comment: I would just like to thank you for your support and help.

**Sgt. Spurr:** The good thing about DNA is it is fragile. The bad thing about DNA is it is fragile .In relation to the question about the vehicles. Our Sheriffs department is made up of many different divisions, auto break-ins are a different division than homicide.

*Sergeant **Ron Breaux** spoke and answered questions.*

We would like to continue these meetings in a week or two; we may have more evidence at that time.

Member Q: I called once and it took 45 minutes for police to show up? What can we anticipate average response time for calls?  
Answer: On this call we were on Piney Creek Road when the call came in, it took 10 minutes time to get to the Musalos home. Average time is 10-15 minutes. If a call took 45 minutes I would be interested in the nature of the call. It is recommended if you have a break in, to pick a place with a land line telephone to retreat to in your house if you fear someone is there. Strongly advise non confrontation. Stay in the house.

Member Q: Does the Sheriff's office have a detailed map of Montreux?  
Answer: Yes and we get it from the assessors website, satellite view of all homes.

Member Q: How often are you patrolling the area?  
Answer: I run the security at the golf tournament so I am very familiar with the area. 2-3 times per shift and a shift is 8 hours.

Member Q: Does the patrol have night vision?  
Answer: Yes and thermal imaging.

Member Q: Is the SWAT team and everyone in uniform?  
Answer: No they are in camo or plain clothes but they will have an identity badge.

Member Q: Have you confirmed footprints are similar?  
Answer: No, not I, not sure about detectives. There were tire tracks and footprints that were covered up.

Member Q: Is it true there are more robberies during day or evening?  
Answer: Truancy enforcement enforced last year and cut down the day burglaries by 75%. There are lots of daytime burglaries.

Member Q: Did the daughter have a key to the house?  
Answer: Not addressing.

*Continued questions with Detective.*

Detective: We have the 6<sup>th</sup> group of trackers here. The first set of trackers looked at all levels of the snow. We have process after process to look at each level.

Member Q: Have you used K9s?  
Answer: Yes and we have pushed them hard and brought in all experienced dogs as well as dogs in training.

Member Q: I am astonished the family hasn't put up a reward. I would if it were my family. What about Montreux putting up a reward?  
Answer: I can't speak for them. We can all just pray for them.

Member Q: Have you used searchlights since last weekend?  
**Officer Forbis** Answer: Yes the lights are on if we are patrolling.

Member Q: Is it more important to leave our outdoor lights on?  
Answer: Yes leave them on if sensors come on. One of my most powerful weapons is a good flashlight. Don't open door unless you know the person, whether gated or not.

Member Q: My husband was out about 11 or 11:30 last night taking the dog for a walk and he saw a car on with lights on and they asked him for identification which he doesn't usually carry while taking the dog out.  
Answer: We are looking for information. We will ask all types of information.

Member Q: Should we tell people when we're home alone?  
Answer: Yes this is an awareness issue. Think about the gate and what's there instead of what's not there. Awareness. Let neighbors or people you know what's going on and when you are home or not. Call us by all means if you are concerned and we will stop by. We look at a house for different reasons.

Member Q: What about construction workers and background checks?  
Answer (Detective): Yes they are started.

Member Q: As far as a security system, who to call first? What if alarm goes off but not an emergency? What percentages of alarms are real? What can we do to not waste your time with non emergencies?

Answer: In 22 years I have been to 2 valid alarms. There are many different types of alarms, panic, system, etc. Not wasting our time at all.

Member Q: To detectives, I have had no false alarms yet. I have Burgarello and on March 14<sup>th</sup> I had a motion sensor alarm at my home and Burgarello called Montreux security. According to Burgarello, Montreux security said they would take care of it. Montreux security said Burgarello has several accounts in our community and is supposed to dispatch the cops. The Burgarello manager said they were told to call Montreux security and that they do not call the cops. Somebody is telling a story or there is a communication breakdown between Montreux and Burgarello. And I have to believe Burgarello's story because they logged the alarm and called security and no one responded to our alarm. As far as I am concerned this is a Montreux problem. Somebody screwed up.

Answer: Yes we have had several cases with Burgarello.

Member Q: Do you have a number we can call? Is there a website to educate us on how to be more secure in our homes?

Answer: 785-4629 for non/emergency/dispatch. They will take evidence. You can go on the internet. I'm not sure if deputies are ready to discuss yet. We are more than welcome to stop by your home to do a run through of what to do.

### **Ron Breaux**

**Desk#: 328-6328, works Sun-Thursday swing shift**

*Questions with Ron Breaux and members.*

Member Q: Have there been any other prowler reports since this?

Answer: Some close to the same day in the Piney Creek area but no not since then.

Member Q: Can you address firearms for personal use?

Answer: You have the right to firearms. There are only 3 paragraphs in the NRS about when to use deadly force on someone. There are lots of

ramifications and training required before you should have a firearm. Use extreme caution when deciding to possess a firearm.

**Deputy Mastinau** (South District Community Liason Representative) spoke: Deputy Walsch is contact. Not at the meeting but he can coordinate neighborhood watch and do a presentation. Montreux security is good. A neighborhood watch would be a good opportunity though. I meet regularly with Nino about issues in the area. This is a shock to all of us as well.

I deal with neighborhood disputes and misdemeanor claims. Please call with problems and questions. You can call the phone number to the patrol office. My direct line is **328-8737**. I am in the same office as Keith.

**Deputy Walsch: 328-3006. He is in office Monday-Thursday mornings.**

**The Sheriff's office website for more information is [www.washoesheriff.com](http://www.washoesheriff.com).** They have Amber Alerts, neighborhood watch information, sex offenders, etc, All info you need. There is also an electronic crime report for you to file reports online. If it is more serious, call the patrol to come out.

Burglaries/vehicles are crimes of opportunity because of what people leave in their cars. Vehicles are left open. There is a sense of security because of the gate. Precautions need to be taken.

**Rob Nichols:**

We have to attend a press conference at 5:30. I now turn it over to Nino with Montreux security to give you a rundown on our current security policy.

**Nino Pipitone:**

Current policy is strict. You must call to let someone in the gate. We issue the homeowners a confidential data sheet. Please tell us if you are on vacation for a vacation watch. This is all for your safety and home safety. Remember to let us know ahead of time. We have 24/7 security. We do not respond to emergencies that need armed men, as we are not armed. Time response here is phenomenal. We have a fire station within a mile and it is a good location. All we need is communication. We try to do the best we can. Response from you is appreciated.

We have a patrol unit from 7 am-midnight 16 hours a day.

*Member questions and answers with Montreux security Nino Pipitone.*

Member Q: Are you considering adding another man?

Answer: We have submitted to the homeowners association board and they have chosen not to authorize the position. Please address to the board.  
(Clarification by Rob Nichols. Nino has presented at the annual meeting of the members the cost of adding another man for a night patrol. Members vote to approve the budget at the annual meetings and the additional position cost has not been approved.)

Member Q: What about camera security?

Answer: Not at this time we don't have any cameras. We are looking into cameras at the main gate and construction gate as well. We issue 1 day passes up to

a 30 day pass depending on how long a job will last. We can go to any car that's parked in Montreux and know who the owner of the car is. We cannot track guests in the same car.

Member Q: How do you assure workers leave the property?

Answer: We have patrol for this. We check all the sites and kick people out who are still on property. We physically patrol after 7 pm to get all people out.

Member comment: Construction workers need to slow down.

Member Q: Do you keep a log on permanent visitors?

Answer: Yes we keep a log with authorizations on the passes we give.

Member Q: What type of protection is there during the PGA?

Answer: The PGA has a self contained unit. They have their own security and volunteers. The security for an event of that size would be impossible to do for our staff.

*Questions to Rob Nichols:*

Member Q: What about the fence around perimeter of property?

Answer: If people want to get in, they will find a way it does not matter what kind of a fence we construct.

Member Q: What about wireless video cameras monitoring. Could we look into this?

Answer: We are thinking about putting together a committee. Please submit to the board why you would like to be on the committee and we will put it together. It is possible for video cameras but expensive. I don't know if crime could be solved this way. Please give your names to the sales office for the committee. The Home Owners Association board will review and come up with a committee. The purpose of the committee is to tell us what you guys want to do for security and how much you want to spend.

Member Q: What about a timeframe for the committee?

Answer: We are asking for your names now and will set it up in the next few days. Please drop off your info to be on the committee at the sales office in the next couple of days

*Questions continued with Nino Pipitone:*

Member Q: Do contractors check out and in?

Answer: No they do not check out.

Member Q: Does the fence extend all around property?

Answer: No currently the steel fence does not extend all the way around Montreux there is a section that we just got permitted a couple of weeks ago which will finish the fence up to the area around the gatehouse which will be

done at a future date. The area around Montreux that does not have the steel fence has barbed wire.

Member Q: Galena creek trail- what can we do to keep people out?

Answer: The sergeant can confirm if people want in they will get in no matter what type of fence we have. Neighborhood watch can help.

*The meeting adjourned at 5:30 pm.*