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Brooklyn slayings latest in rash of fatal violence

By Melanie Lefkowitz and Sean Gardiner
STAFF WRITERS

A shoot-out on a Brooklyn street corner yesterday afternoon left two men dead and three others wounded in what police say may have been retribution for another slaying Sunday.

The shooting, which started at Fleet Walk in the Fort Greene Houses, further pumps up a homicide and shooting rate that has already increased sharply over the past several weeks.

From 2 p.m. Tuesday to 3 p.m. yesterday, for example, seven people were killed in separate incidents, and two bodies were found, police said.

Nonetheless, city officials downplayed the recent surge.

"Crime is down this year more than it has been in the last five years," Mayor Rudolph Giuliani said yesterday, adding that "there are spikes."

But even as officials emphasized that overall crime is still declining, police brass have begun taking measures to counteract the spike in shootings and homicides.

"Always in the past when the surge has been identified and they move the resources to counter it, they've brought it under control, so I expect they will this time," said Thomas Reppetto, president of the Citizens Crime Commission, a watchdog group. "What is the long-term meaning? I don't know."

Called to the corner of Prince Street and Myrtle Avenue at 3 p.m. yesterday on a report of shots fired, police found Shaun Grant, 21, of 685 Gates Ave., shot in the head. He was pronounced dead on arrival at Brooklyn Hospital Center.

The second victim, Kenny Soloman, died last night at Bellevue Hospital Center.

Another wounded man was found inside the Associated Supermarket at 180 Myrtle Ave., police said. Another was lying in front of a KFC at the corner of Myrtle Avenue and Navy Walk. And another, Joe Roberts, 18, was found shot at the wheel of his red Chevy Cavalier, which crashed blocks away, at the corner of South Portland and Fulton avenues. A gun was inside the car, police said. Two others were found outside the car.

Roberts, Kevin Bailey, 29, and Lamont Warren, 28, were in stable condition at Brooklyn Hospital Center.

The deaths of Grant and Soloman bring to 19 the number of homicides since Dec. 1.

Jose Munez, 37, the manager at the Associated Supermarket, said one of the wounded men stumbled into the store, weaving through customers. Munez said the man screamed, "I got shot! I'm OK but I got shot!" The man, who was shot in the leg and torso, collapsed in the rear of the store.

Police said they are investigating the connection between yesterday's shooting and the death of Terrell Kearney, 23. Kearney was gunned down at 5 a.m. Sunday on the same corner. No arrests have been made in Kearney's slaying.

The police are also investigating:

- The death of Erik Hernandez, 26, of Corona, who was shot and then dumped on a grassy knoll on the side of the Cross Island Parkway near the Union Turnpike exit. Hernandez, who had been shot several times, was found at 6:45 a.m. yesterday. His wallet still had his identification in it but no money. He was carrying a mini-courtesy shield from the Brooklyn district attorney's office, which is usually given to relatives or friends of prosecutors and investiga-

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