



Ohio Attorney General's Office Bureau of Criminal Investigation Investigative Report



2025-1666

Officer Involved Critical Incident - 909 Garden Ave.,
Middletown, OH 45044 (L)

Investigative Activity: Scene Processing (Scene 1 and 3)
Involves: Middletown Police Department
Activity Date: 05/27/2025
Activity Location: 909 Garden Avenue, Middletown Ohio 45055
Authoring Agent: Crime Scene Technician Holly Ryczek #205

On Tuesday, May 27th, 2025, the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation (BCI) was requested by the Middletown Police Department (MPD) to investigate an officer involved critical incident (OICI). Reportedly, MPD was executing five narcotics search warrants during the early morning hours. Their fifth and final search warrant was located at 909 Garden Avenue. Upon arrival, officers knocked on the door announcing that they were police. After knocking and announcing, Michael Baker (Baker) opened the door with a firearm pointed at officers. In response, one officer allegedly fired multiple shots, thus striking and killing Baker, who was pronounced deceased at the scene. A second individual inside the residence, Mary Dunn (Dunn), was grazed by a bullet on her leg, however her injury was non-life-threatening. Crime Scene Technician (CST) Holly Ryczek responded to the scene to assist. CST Amy Cruvey responded to the Middletown Police Department, located at the Middletown City Building (1 Donham Plaza, Middletown, Ohio, 45042), and documented the involved officer as Scene #2.

Scene #1: 909 Garden Avenue

CST Ryczek arrived at 909 Garden Avenue at approximately 0950 hours. Upon arrival, she was advised by Special Agent (SA) Steve Seitzman that the incident had occurred in the front doorway of the residence. He advised a search warrant was in the process of being signed for the house. The scene had been cordoned off by MPD with yellow crime scene tape, multiple law enforcement vehicles, and uniformed personnel. CST Ryczek utilized a BCI crime scene log to document access into the scene. Once the search warrant had been signed, the scene was documented through photography and a Leica BLK360 3D scanner was utilized to collect measurements of the area.

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Image 1. Overall of 909 Garden Avenue

The residence was described as a single-story house with a basement. The first floor consisted of a living room, kitchen, two bedrooms, and a bathroom.

Prior to BCI's arrival, multiple cartridge cases and a firearm had been marked by MPD with evidence markers. CST Ryczek replaced the markers from MPD with her own evidence markers.

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Image 2. Overall of Michael Baker

Baker was observed to be lying face-up on the floor of the living room with his head facing north and feet facing south. His body was located directly inside the front door of the residence. His hands were handcuffed together with two pairs of handcuffs and locked behind his back. Baker was not wearing any clothing on his torso. He had on a pair of grey underwear and a pair of teal shorts on his legs, along with a pair of white and black socks on his feet. Baker has suspected blood coming from his head and torso. Butler County Coroner's Office (BCCO) Investigator Matt Ashcraft assisted with examining the decedent. He noted possible bullet wounds on Baker's chest and right hip. Investigator Ashcraft then transferred him to a body bag with bag seal lock number 00007254. Baker was then transported to the Butler County Coroner's Office for an autopsy.

A total of four FC 9mm Luger cartridge cases were located on the sidewalk and roadway directly to the east of the residence (Items #1-3, #10).

A firearm was located on the living room floor just before the entryway leading to the east bedroom. The firearm was a black and silver colored Smith and Wesson Airweight .38 SPL+P revolver (S/N: CZH5794). The firearm contained three RP .38 SPL and one RP

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.38 SPL+P cartridges in the cylinder. The cylinder's capacity was five, and therefore there was one empty chamber. This firearm and cartridges were collected as item #4.

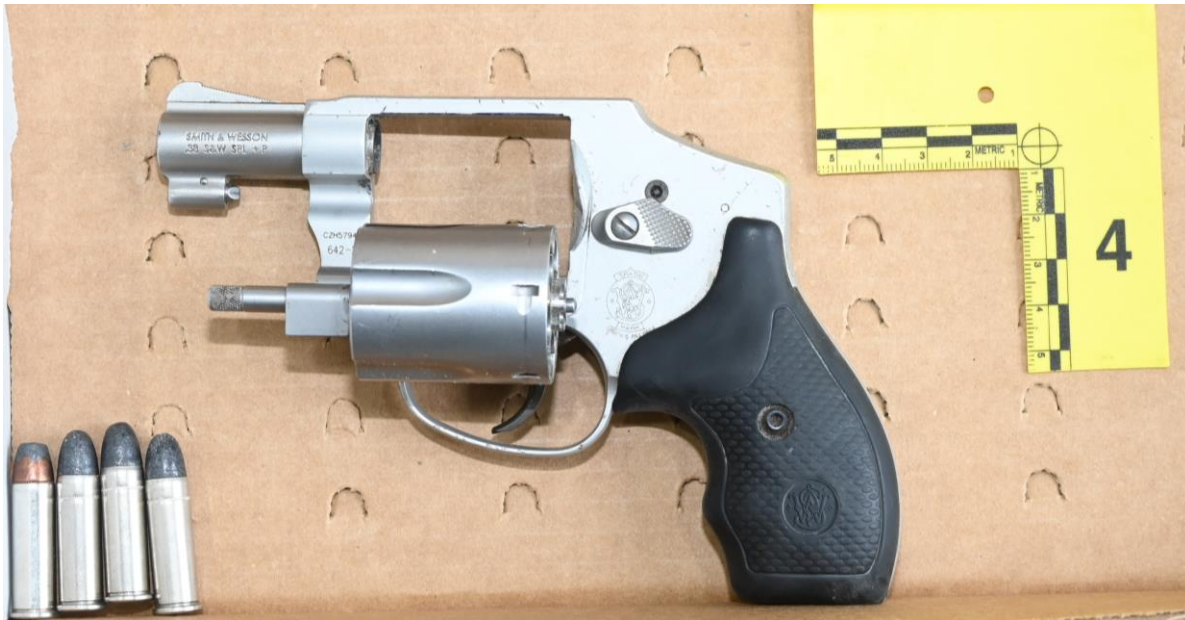


Image 3. Smith and Wesson Airweight .38 SPL+P Revolver (Item #4)

A ballistic event (BE) was observed in the glass of the front door window. The BE was circular in shape with concentric fractures¹ surrounding the defect, and radial fractures² radiating from the defect. The glass near the defect on the exterior portion of the door was smooth while oppositely on the interior portion of the door, the glass exhibited beveling. This BE was labeled 1.0 for documentation purposes. The BE perforated the glass window, perforated a blind behind the window (BE 1.1), and penetrated the wooden front door window frame (BE 1.2). A projectile was recovered from the window frame and collected as Item #12.

A second BE was observed on the kitchen floor. The BE was elongated in shape and labeled as BE 2.0. The BE appeared to ricochet off of the kitchen floor and penetrate the northeast kitchen wall (BE 2.1). A projectile was located on the center of the kitchen floor and collected as Item #8.

¹ Circular or crescent shaped fractures of glass surrounding a point of impact or defect

² Linear or near linear fractures radiating outward from the point of impact or defect

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On the couch cover in the living room, a third BE was observed. The BE was circular in shape and labeled as BE 3.0. The BE perforated the front couch cover, perforated the couch (BE 3.1 and 3.3)³, and perforated the back couch cover (BE 3.4).

A projectile fragment was located along the west wall of the living room behind the couch. This fragment was collected as Item #7.

Due to the attempted narcotics search warrant which occurred prior to the OICI, it was determined that MPD would take all electronics after the scene was processed by BCI. Phones labeled with evidence markers #5, #6, and #9 were therefore not collected by BCI personnel.

While on scene, clothing items belonging to Dunn were collected from the hospital and transferred to the scene. These clothing items included one red t-shirt, one pair of blue shorts, one pair of socks, and one pair of slippers. These clothing items were collected together as Item #11.

After documenting the involved officer at the MPD (Scene #2), CST Amy Cruey transferred the officer's firearm (item #1) to CST Ryczek at approximately 1138 hours. See *Processing of Involved Officer* report by CST Cruey for details.

Agents prepared separate inventories for the residence (Scene #1) and MPD (Scene #2) which were provided to SA Ward. BCI personnel cleared from the shooting scene at approximately 1245 hours.

Scene #3: Property from Autopsy

On May 29th, 2025, CST Ryczek arrived at the Butler County Coroner's Office at approximately 1014 hours to collect the evidence obtained from Baker's autopsy. CST Ryczek processed the items at BCI Headquarters at approximately 1300 hours. The items included:

- One projectile recovered from Baker
- Two pairs of handcuffs
- One DNA card
- Left hand swabs
- Right hand swabs
- Left hand clippings and scrapings
- Right hand clippings and scrapings
- One oral swab

³ BE 3.2 was erroneously skipped

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- Combed head hair
- Plucked head hair
- One body bag seal
- Baker's clothing items

The projectile was collected as Item #1, the handcuffs as Item #2, and the DNA card as Item #3. All other biological evidence was collected together as Item #4.

While at BCI headquarters, CST Ryczek processed the clothing items collected from Baker during autopsy. These items included a pair of black and white "Hanes" brand socks, a pair of grey and red "Hanes" brand underwear with suspected blood on them, and a pair of teal "Adidas" brand shorts with suspected blood on them. One suspected BE was located in the front right pocket of the shorts. The clothing items were collected separately as Items #5-#7, respectively.

Disposition of Evidence:

On May 27th, 2025, at approximately 1522 hours, CST Ryczek placed all of the items from Scenes #1-#2 in the temporary evidence locker at BCI headquarters in London, OH.

On May 30th, 2025, after retrieving autopsy evidence, CST Ryczek transferred the two pairs of handcuffs (Item #2) to MPD at approximately 1100 hours.

At approximately 1300 hours, CST Ryczek retrieved the items located at BCI Headquarters and processed the items from Scene #3.

The following items were submitted to the BCI laboratory for comparison at approximately 1320 hours:

Scene #1 (Shooting scene): Items #1-#3 and #10 (cartridge cases), #4 (Baker's firearm), and Items #10 and #12 (projectiles)

Scene #2 (Processing of Involved Officer): Item #1 (Officer's firearm)

Scene #3 (Autopsy evidence): Item #1 (projectile) and Item #3 (DNA card)

All remaining items were placed into temporary evidence locker #1 to be submitted into the major crimes evidence vault at approximately 1410 hours.

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