

ST. PAUL

Mom feared tragic end for son shot by St. Paul police

A mother feared a tragic end for her only son, who was fatally shot at a motel Monday night by St. Paul police.

By Chao Xiong (<https://www.startribune.com/chao-xiong/10646266/>) Star Tribune |

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Despite the time and hope that John Charles Carr's mother invested in helping him fight his meth addiction, deep in her heart she knew her only son would meet a tragic end.

When police arrived on her Amery, Wis., doorstep Monday night to tell her that Carr had been shot by St. Paul police after allegedly confronting them in a motel with two large knives, she was grateful that no one else was harmed.

"I guess I've always known that this was probably how it was going to end," his mother, Linda Menge, said in a weary voice Tuesday evening. "I always felt that he was in pain. At this point, I feel that he's out of that now."

Carr, 36, died after being shot multiple times about 7:30 p.m. in the Super 8 Motel at 1739 Old Hudson Road. Police spokesman Sgt. Pete Crum said callers dialed 911 to report that Carr was suicidal, armed with knives and possibly high on meth.

Police would not say what may have led to Carr's mental state Monday, but court documents, his mother and his stepfather paint a picture of a man tortured by addiction, violence and mental health problems.

Linda and Mitch Menge, said Carr started using meth when he was about 20. He dipped in and out of the addiction, and his behavior reflected it.

'He wasn't always on drugs'

When he wasn't using, his parents said, he was a well-liked guy who worked and who loved to fish, camp and take his two children to waterparks.

"He was great with his kids," said Mitch Menge. "He wasn't always on drugs."

But Carr's life also took dark turns.

He pleaded guilty in 2004 to felony second-degree assault for a violent attack on his then-wife that left her bruised over her upper torso. According to a criminal complaint filed in Ramsey County District Court, Carr punched and kicked his wife repeatedly, choked her and struck her with a metal shower curtain rod, bending it.

Carr told police that he was bipolar, paranoid-schizophrenic and manic-depressive, taking several medications for the conditions, according to the complaint. That same year, his sister-in-law petitioned for custody of his daughter, now 11, citing her parents' inability to care for her, including Carr's drug use and commitment to a psychiatric hospital in St. Peter, Minn.

He also had convictions for drunken driving and possession of a controlled substance.

When officers knocked on Carr's third-floor motel room door Monday evening, he allegedly yelled through the door with threats to kill them. Police were evacuating nearby occupants when Carr came out and confronted four police officers in the hallway with a large utility knife in each hand. He was shot and died at the scene.

Carr confronted the officers in "close proximity" and words were exchanged, Crum said. It's unclear how many times he was shot and by how many officers. Autopsy results are pending.

He seemed fine a month ago



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John C. Carr

Carr's parents don't know what may have pushed him over the edge. His mother, who sent him to multiple rehabilitation centers, said he seemed fine the last time she saw him about a month ago. He had just moved into a bigger apartment with his longtime girlfriend and his 4-year-old son from his marriage.

"The thing is, it reaches a point where you don't want to be an enabler, yet you want him to know that you love him, and you're always there to support him," Linda Menge said.

Carr, who had lived in Anoka, graduated from Tartan High School in 1992.

"The dude always had a smile on his face and was always laughing," said Shane Patten, a school friend. "That's how I remember him."

Carr's romantic ups and downs are chronicled on his girlfriend's Facebook profile, which shows fluctuations from "in a relationship" to "it's complicated" to "in a relationship," but his parents were unsure if that played a role Monday.

The four officers -- Colby Bragg, Arnulfo Curiel, Joshua Raichert and Justin Rangel -- are on paid administrative leave, which is standard practice.

The incident will be investigated and presented to the Ramsey County attorney's office for consideration by a grand jury, which is also standard procedure.

Staff writer Tim Harlow contributed to this report. Chao Xiong • 612-673-4391

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