



El Paso roundup

Police unit probes motive for shooting woman in wreck

While Crimes Against Persons detectives were attempting Saturday to establish a motive for the shooting of Betty Schwartz Walker, the 52-year-old woman was removed from the critical list at Providence Memorial Hospital.

However, hospital attendants said Mrs. Walker remains in serious condition.

She was allegedly shot by her husband, Dr. Jack Walker Jr., after their 1969 Mustang convertible went out of control Friday morning on Interstate 10 near the west Paisano overpass. She was pinned inside the wreckage for several minutes before ambulance attendants removed her from the vehicle.

Witnesses alleged Mrs. Walker was shot in the head with a .38-caliber pistol after the couple's vehicle wrecked.

Dr. Walker was arrested at the scene of the accident and charged with criminal attempted murder in Justice of the Peace Robert Kessel's court. He was later released from custody after posting a \$50,000 bond.

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Doctor's wife died from drug overdose

An El Paso physician's wife found dead in her Upper Valley home Tuesday died of an overdose of drugs "used in anesthesiology," the county medical examiner said Thursday.

Dr. Juan Contin said tests revealed that Betty Walker, a former nurse, died of an overdose of Bretilval and Ketamine.

"She had enough to kill her many times over," Contin said. The drugs were injected in her right arm, he said.

Tito Silva, a pharmacist, said the drugs act almost immediately. Silva said the drugs are available only in hospitals and only anesthesiologists are qualified to administer them.

Mrs. Walker's husband, Dr. Jack Walker, was found shot to death outside the home. Mrs. Walker was found lying on a recliner in the kitchen-den covered with a pink-and-blue blanket drawn up to her neck.

Last August, Walker was charged with attempted murder after his wife was shot in the head with a .38-caliber pistol as she sat pinned in the wreckage of the couple's car in El Paso. The charges later were dropped.

It had been reported Mrs. Walker might have died of cancer.

Contin said it was possible she had cancer earlier, but there was "no cancer evidence in the autopsy."

Sheriff's deputies found nine empty vials of medication in a wastebasket in the Walker's den Tuesday.

The results of Walker's blood tests were unavailable Thursday.

Walker died of a single gunshot wound in the chest. A .44-caliber Magnum pistol was found near his body.

A spokesman for the Sheriff's Department said the case is still being investigated by the Sheriff's Department.

Funeral for the Walkers will be at 3 p.m. Friday at St. Francis on the Hill Episcopal Church. Burial will be in Memory Garden of the Valley Cemetery.

The Walkers are survived by a son, Dan Walker of El Paso, and a daughter, Sandra Barker of Alamogordo, N.M. Walker also is survived by two sisters, Mrs. Ann Hollingsworth, of Oklahoma City, Okla., and Sue Oliver of Texas City.

Mrs. Walker also is survived by her mother, Mrs. R.E. Schwartz of Hattisburg, Miss., and a brother.

Autopsy: Cancer didn't kill doctor's wife

By PAT TATUM
Times Staff Writer

An autopsy revealed the wife of an El Paso physician, found dead in her Upper Valley home Tuesday, did not die of cancer as was earlier believed, sheriff's deputies said Wednesday.

Sheriff Ray Montes said Tuesday the circumstances surrounding the death of Betty Walker did not appear natural. He said the autopsy results would determine the direction his department's investigation would take.

A medical examiner's investigator said

Mrs. Walker had no obvious wounds. Mrs. Walker was found lying on the sofa in the kitchen-den of her home Tuesday afternoon.

Her husband, Dr. Jack Walker, was found a few feet outside the front door with a single gunshot wound in his chest.

A .44-caliber Magnum pistol was found near Walker's body.

Montes said Tuesday Walker's wound apparently was self-inflicted and that he understood Mrs. Walker suffered from terminal cancer.

Montes could not be reached late Wednesday for a comment on the cause of Mrs. Walker's death or the direction of the sheriff's investigation.

Chief Deputy Jesus Reyes said Mrs. Walker "did not die a natural death. ... The woman did not have terminal cancer. We are looking elsewhere."

Reyes would not elaborate.

Sheriff's Sgt. John Navar said nine empty vials of medication, "the kind an anesthesiologist would use," and a hypodermic syringe were found in a waste basket in the den of the Walkers ranch-

house.

Two handwritten notes were also found on a desk in the den.

Deputies would not comment when asked if Mrs. Walker had been injected with the contents of the empty vials.

County Medical Examiner Dr. Juan Contin said more tests are being conducted on Mrs. Walker. The results will be ready late Thursday, he said.

One of the notes was addressed to Richard Cox, a veterinarian, and his secretary, Eleanor Rix.

Cox said the note thanked him and Mrs.

Rix for the help and support they had given the Walkers.

"It was a very short note," Cox said. He said he had only seen Walker once since August 1979.

Mrs. Rix described her relationship with the Walkers as "very close."

Navar said the note addressed to Cox and Mrs. Rix said, "Thank you for not letting them find us."

Navar said he did not know whom "us" referred to.

The second note, he said, was a page (Please see Walker, Page 4B)

Walker

(Continued from Page 1B)

long. It was addressed to the Walkers' son and daughter, Dan Walker of El Paso and Sandra Barker of Alamogordo, N.M.

Navar said the note asked for the children's forgiveness. It said Walker couldn't let Mrs. Walker suffer and told them of "the desperate struggle" he was going through.

He said the note was signed "your mother and father."

Sheriff's deputies said they have a theory about the case, but are waiting for blood tests due Thursday to proceed.

Emilio Cereceres, the Walkers handyman of six years, was on the grounds Tuesday afternoon. He said Walker earlier had asked him to tie up the dogs.

Cereceres said Walker spoke to him in a normal manner, but that "his eyes looked sad."

He said he heard a gun shot, but did not go to the house immediately after it was fired.

Cereceres said he last saw Mrs. Walker last Friday.

"She never went out of the house," he said. "She just stayed in the house and watched TV all day."

Cox said the Walkers were his clients. He said he saw Mrs. Walker "a couple of months ago."

"I thought she was looking quite well. She was still convalescing," he said. "She had a little paralysis in her face."

Cox was referring to the gunshot wounds to the head Mrs. Walker suffered in August of 1979 that required six hours of surgery.

Mrs. Walker was shot as she sat pinned in the front seat of the Walker's wrecked convertible. Her husband was charged with attempted murder in the shooting.

A witness to that incident said he had to forcibly pry the .38-caliber pistol from Walker's hand.

Charges against Walker were dropped Sept. 12, 1979. Mrs. Walker signed a non-prosecution affidavit.

It stated in part "I did not wish and will not pursue any criminal actions against my husband."

Funeral arrangements for the Walkers are pending.



—(Times staff photo by Lance Murray)

Examining the body

Sheriff Ray Montes, right, and Medical Examiner's Investigator Manny Diaz, center, watch Tuesday afternoon as sheriff's deputies examine the area around the body of Dr. Jack Walker, who was found

dead with a gunshot wound in his chest outside his Upper Valley home. Walker's wife Betty was found dead of apparently natural causes in a bedroom of the home.