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Killings baffle Bucyrus

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About 9 p.m., Chatman's aunt, Linda J. Chatman, 39, stopped by to pick them up as a favor to the children's mother.

Both Marichell and Linda Chatman, and Marichell's 4-year-old daughter, Marchae Chatman, were killed.

All day Monday, people gathered nearby at Ike's Restaurant to puzzle over the murders — the first in this city since 1991. The front counter was jammed as locals and out-of-town news reporters tried to get the scoop. At one point, a TV helicopter stirred up snow flurries as it landed in a cornfield next to the apartments.

Neighbors who peered into the apartment before police arrived said the women and children were gunned down where they sat. The body of 4-year-old Marchae lay at the edge of the doorway, leaving neighbors to speculate that she had been shot when she opened the door.

Richard Wade, who lives in an adjoining apartment, heard voices and then shots coming from the Chatman apartment. "I heard, 'What do you want or what are you doing here,'" Wade said.

Then a barrage of what police have described as "numerous shots," perhaps as many as 20, poured into the apartment. All six people suffered from multiple wounds.

Warren was able to flee to Ike's, which is 50 yards away and open all night. Warren had moved into the apartment about two weeks ago to be with his girlfriend, Marichell Chatman.

Drops of blood marking Warren's path could be seen in the snow Monday. The trail led through a field that separates the apartment from the restaurant and past a spot where Warren was hit and fell in the snow.

It's believed that the killer fled after he shot Warren outside the apartment. He might have seen a neighbor staring at him through the window of another apartment, neighbor Kathy Gate said. Police suspect that the man ran to a car that was parked nearby.

Warren, who suffered from bullet wounds to the groin and chest, was able to get up and make it to the restaurant.

"I've been shot!" he shouted at a locked side door. A cook heard him, but before the employees in the back of the restaurant could react, Warren made his way to the front door, witnesses said.

Witnesses said the killer wore a ski mask or toboggan hat, but other than that police have been unable to compile a physical description.

"He's between 5 feet 2 and 6 feet 8," Bucyrus Police Chief Joe Beran said. "Everybody's a suspect and nobody's a suspect."

Police have also been unable to narrow a list of possible motives. "Nothing has been ruled out," Beran said. "Things are coming together real good for us, but at the same time it could turn and go south."

Police were trying to compile information about possible suspects and said they hoped to interview Warren at the hospital as soon as possible.

Beran declined to comment further and said no one has been brought in for questioning.

"We feel it was not a random attack," Beran said.

Robbery has been ruled out, he said, and no evidence has been found that the killings involved drugs.

Witnesses saw a light-colored car speeding from the parking lot after the shootings. Investigators from the state Bureau of Criminal Investigation were working on the case Monday, analyzing tire tracks that might have been left by the car. They were also collecting shell casings.