

Passengers to judge: Osteen didn't fight

Special to Sentinel-Voice

HOUSTON — Three airline passengers testified Wednesday they never saw or heard any indication that the wife of megachurch evangelist Joel Osteen assaulted a flight attendant in 2005.

Continental Airlines flight attendant Sharon Brown claims in her lawsuit that Victoria Osteen yelled at her, threw her against a bathroom door and elbowed her when a spill on the armrest of her first-class seat wasn't quickly cleaned up.

Brown claims she suffered physical and psychological injuries.

However, three first-class passengers on the plane testified that they never saw or heard anything to indicate that Victoria Osteen assaulted Brown before the start of the flight from Houston to Vail, Colo.

"There wasn't anything that occurred that she could be suing over," said Laura



Sharon Brown claims Victoria Osteen assaulted her.

Knoppe, who was sitting in the first row of first-class seats, closest to where Brown said the attack took place.

Knoppe, who was called

by Victoria Osteen's attorney, Rusty Hardin, said she never heard Osteen yelling or screaming.

Another passenger, Bar-



Lakewood Church co-pastor Victoria Osteen and her husband, Joel Osteen arrive at the 113th District Court on Tuesday in the Harris County Civil Courthouse in Houston Texas.

bara Shedden, who had been called by Brown's attorney, described the interaction between Brown and Victoria Osteen as "just a power of the wills. It was very authoritative on both parts."

Shedden said Victoria Osteen was out of line by standing in the aisle while she waited for the spill to be cleaned up, but testified she doubted an attack took place.

A third passenger, James

Steele, said he never heard any yelling or sounds of a physical altercation.

Earlier Wednesday, Brown's attorney, Reginald McKamie, rested his case.

Brown is asking for an apology and 10 percent of Victoria Osteen's net worth. Osteen's lawyers would not discuss her finances, so it was unclear how much 10 percent would be.

The Osteens paid a \$3,000

fine the Federal Aviation Administration levied against Victoria Osteen for interfering with a crew member but testified they did that to put the incident behind them.

They are co-pastors of Houston's Lakewood Church, which draws about 42,000 people each week. His weekly television address is broadcast internationally, and his books are sold around the globe.

NYPD fatally shoots man

By Cyril "Josh" Barker

Special to Sentinel-Voice

NEW YORK CITY (NNPA) — According to some Bed-Stuy residents, there is yet another episode in the saga of trigger-happy cops on young Black men. The story of the NYPD opening fire and a young Black man lying dead in questionable circumstances is becoming all-too familiar across the city.

And while officers say that the shooting was justifiable, family members find it hard to believe that their relative prompted officers to kill. The latest incident involves Darryl Battle, 20, who was shot dead by cops at his home in Bed-Stuy, Brooklyn, on Decatur Street early Aug. 2.

Two detectives came to Battle's apartment shortly before 9 a.m. to discuss his allegedly trying to cash forged checks at a Manhattan bank. The detectives were from the 19th Precinct on Manhattan's East Side. Police say that when Battle led the detectives to the kitchen, they were talking when Battle said he wanted to go and get a drink of water and returned with an 11-inch kitchen knife and threatened them. Detective Michael Ahearn, a nearly 20-year veteran, said that he demanded Battle put the knife down, but Battle refused. After some

verbal exchanges, Battle reportedly came within six feet of the detectives before Ahearn opened fire, lodging a bullet fatally in Battle's chest.

Battle died shortly after arriving to Kings County Hospital, leaving behind a 6-month-old child. The family is requesting an independent investigation and is in negotiation with Atty. Neville Mitchell about possible legal representation. Mitchell represented the parents of Sean Bell after he was fatally shot by police in November 2006. Battle's family is calling the death "murder."

The NYPD has determined that the detectives were acting within police guidelines because they felt their lives were in danger. The detectives passed a Breathalyzer test to determine their blood alcohol level at the time of the shooting. Police said the detectives were backed into a corner and couldn't get out of the apartment, leaving them no choice. Ahearn has previous experience in hostage situations, negotiating with a man who had a gun in the 19th Precinct in 2002.

During a hostage situation that lasted hours, Ahearn persuaded the suspect to surrender. Ahearn claims that shooting Battle was the first time he ever had to fire his

weapon. But family, friends and those close to Battle have a different story and say that Battle would've never acted in such a manner. At a press conference the next day in front of his home, family members called Battle a "law-abiding citizen" and said he's "not that kind of person."

At the press conference, Battle's niece, Sho'Shonda Smith, said that her uncle's death will not be in vain and that she was disappointed at the police's "drastic measures" during the incident. Another relative, Battle's cousin Nathan Archer, said the family wants the truth. "He was not a bad kid or a thug," said Tabari Bomani, a former teacher of Battle's at Bushwick Community High School. "He's not the kind of guy that would pull out a knife on two police officers. He never got into a physical confrontation, and he would always find a way to apologize. There is a specific attack laid out for Black and Latino youth who are poor."

Bomani also said that while Battle got in minor trouble in school like most kids, he was involved in community groups. "This is insane," Councilmember Charles Barron said. "A young man in his home and gets a bullet in the heart. This

(See NYPD, Page 4)

FEDERAL HOUSING ADMINISTRATION

UNSURE ABOUT
A REFINANCE OR
HOME PURCHASE?

Get Back to Basics
with FHA

Make an Informed Decision

The Federal Housing Administration helped your parents and grandparents buy and keep their homes. As part of the federal government, FHA offers through its network of approved lenders:

- * Foreclosure prevention options
- * No prepayment penalties
- * Low downpayment requirements, and
- * Allows non-traditional credit

1-800-CALL-FHA (225-5342)
or www.fha.gov



FHA has helped over 34 million people secure the dream of homeownership since 1934.

