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cause "in my neighborhood that's the only way you can get the cops to come to your house."

According to the officers, Adkins tried to grab Melendez's gun. However, the media was told that Adkins had been firing his own gun out his truck window. No such gun was ever found.

Melendez's widow was not willing to comment, but his mother Lula Adkins, who lost custody of him when he was six, said sadly, "I still miss him. I miss his laugh." Attorney Ronald Bowling said Melendez

never received any discipline in the case.

However, then police chief Isiah McKinnon found Melendez guilty of "improper conduct" for an incident later that month. Court records in the lawsuit of Aubrey and Susie Stanley, which settled for \$34,000, claim that Melendez, Gonzalez, and officer Pleze Gardner invaded their 35<sup>th</sup> Street home on August 30, 1995.

The records say Aubrey Stanley was "beaten about the face, head and back and thrown to the ground

while handcuffed in his living room ... damaging his facial structure, eyes, teeth and other parts of his body," and falsely arrested.

The lawsuit says the officers terrorized Susie Stanley and the couple's young children by putting guns in their faces, then stole a child's new bike. The bike was returned after the improper conduct finding on a citizens' complaint filed by the Stanleys.

The following year, Fourth Precinct Commander Alfred Gomez-Mesquita recommended the initiation of criminal charges for "entry

without owner's permission, assault and battery, false arrest, and obstruction of justice" in the case of Evan Cosme and Danny McCoy.

Melendez and his partner Dominic Medina were found by police investigators to have kicked down the door to Cosme's Sharon Street home on June 25, 1997, entered without a warrant, and assaulted Cosme. The officers then falsely reported that they had never gone inside and that Cosme and McCoy possessed drugs. That lawsuit settled for \$25,000.

The fourth lawsuit, which settled

for \$100,000, stemmed from an August 1995 incident. Melendez and his partner were alleged to have assaulted and falsely arrested John Orick while Orick was helping a security guard apprehend a shoplifter. The lawsuit says the officers rubbed Orick's face into the pavement and jerked him upright while handcuffed, causing permanent injuries.

A phone call to Commander Gomez-Mesquita regarding officer Melendez had not been returned by press time.