

Thursday
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35 cents
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Weather
Partly cloudy with a
chance of isolated
showers. High, mid-80s.
Low, lower 70s.
Southeast wind near 10
mph. Details, A18.

Classmates doubt 'run-of-the-mill' cop gunned down JFK

By Earl Golz
American-Statesman Staff

Four Dallas police academy classmates of Roscoe Anthony White, including two who rode with him for three months in a car-pool, contend he didn't have the emotional fortitude or rifle skills

necessary to assassinate President Kennedy.

They dispute the story of Roscoe White's son Ricky, who claimed this week that his father's diary — which has disappeared — revealed Roscoe White was one of three gunmen who killed Kennedy. The three ex-police officers and

a Dallas police sergeant, calling Roscoe White a "routine Marine jarhead" and a "run-of-the-mill, average person," questioned whether Roscoe White was capable of pulling off one of the most astounding murders of the 20th century. Wilbur Bernard, who said he

drove with White every weekday to the police academy for three months beginning shortly after the assassination, expressed doubts about White's accuracy with firearms. Bernard placed fifth in marksmanship in a class of about 30, he said. White, much farther down the list, "wasn't one of the

best" shooters, he said. Roscoe White "never ever mentioned ever being associated with Lee Harvey Oswald, and I think I knew him about as well as anybody at that time," said Bernard, who recently retired from the Dallas police force. Bernard said, "I talked to him

the day after the assassination," which took place Nov. 22, 1963. "I saw him every day after that when we went to the academy (beginning Dec. 11, 1963). There is no way he could have hidden his emotions that well. He was a real popular upbeat
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guy," Bernard said. "He had a lot of motivation and helped me a lot because he motivated me. You would think if he was involved in an assassination plot, he would be apprehensive or withdrawn. It would be hard to maintain an everyday happy face if you were involved in some sort of grant conspiracy that was going to affect the outcome of the nation for years to come."

Although the Warren Commission and the House Select Committee on Assassinations concluded that Lee Harvey Oswald fired the fatal shots, Ricky White produced evidence this week that he says proves his father and a government intelligence source were involved in the

crime.

Ricky White claims his father and two other shooters fled Dallas to a "safe house" in the Dripping Springs area after Jack Ruby shot accused assassin Oswald in the basement of the Dallas City Hall. White joined the force one month before the assassination and left two years later. He died in an industrial fire in 1971.

Military records show Roscoe White and Oswald boarded a ship for Japan in 1957 and disembarked at the same Japanese city as they began their first year of overseas Marine duty. Roscoe White's wife Geneva also has acknowledged that she worked as a hostess in Jack Ruby's Carousel Club in Dallas two months before the assassination.

Bernard, who was one of White's closest friends, said Wednesday that White wasn't gone for four days to hide out after the assassination of Kennedy, as White's son asserts.

"No doubt I would have known about it," said Bernard, who worked in the police identification bureau with the ex-Marine at the time of the shooting in Dallas. "I don't remember anything like that. If he had been gone for four days it would have been very noticeable, because he couldn't have possibly had any time off to do that. We had not earned any sick time or vacation time."

Another police academy classmate of White's was John T. Wilhams, enforcement director of the Texas Racing Commission.

He terms Ricky White's statements about his father "unbelievable."

"He was just a routine Marine," said Wilhams. "I never heard or indicated to anyone that he was personally acquainted with Oswald or knew anything about the assassination. He quit the force because he was having marital and financial problems."

Bill Scott, now security chief at Bank of the Southwest in Dallas, rode in the carpool with Bernard White and White to the police academy. White's son's accusations about his father "blew my mind," said Scott, who described Roscoe White as a "run-of-the-mill, average person who wasn't outstanding in anything."

people," Scott said. "I don't think the man was capable of assassination. It wasn't the Roscoe White I knew, if that's the fact that I know."

"If I was a paid assassin, I damn sure wouldn't have to work two or three part-time jobs to make ends meet. It's beyond me. I might be able to think of some people that might be capable of pulling off something like that, but Roscoe certainly wouldn't fit the mold. He definitely wasn't that macho."

Sgt. Don Young, another academy classmate, branded Ricky White's assertions as "ridiculous." Every officer at the time was talking about the assassination, Young said, "but I don't remember Roscoe talking about it more than anyone else."