

# Family Demands Investigation Involving Death of Fred Grady

by Lesley R. Chinn

Frederick Moore Jr. and Diane Grady-McGee, son and sister of the late Frederick Grady, respectively, remember him as someone who would not hurt anyone.

On April 9, Grady died of coronary arteriosclerosis heart disease after he had an accident on April 8, according to medical reports from the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office. He was 49 years old.

Grady was on his way home from W. Polk after remodeling his aunt's bathroom when the accident occurred on W. 18<sup>th</sup> St.

Grady-McGee and Moore said they both want to know what was the exact cause of Grady's death. They made this request during a press conference held recently at the South Side Branch NAACP Headquarters, 800 E. 78<sup>th</sup> St.

"I just hope that we can draw something positive out of all this," Moore said. "I just want to know what really happened to my father. I just want to have some closure."

Atty. Bart Beals of the law firm Saulter and Beals, said a lawsuit is in the process of being filed by Grady's family against the City of Chicago and Cook County regarding Grady's death. Beals is representing the Grady family.

The Grady family, Beals said, is currently seeking an immediate investigation by the Civil Rights Department of the Illinois Attorney General and the Civil Rights Division of the United States Department of Justice.

"There are a lot of questions that are still out there that need to be answered," he said. "A lot of information is still within the hands of the Chicago Police Department and Cook County Medical Examiner's Office."

When Grady arrived at the 12<sup>th</sup> District Chicago Police Department (CPD) station at 100 S. Racine, called his girlfriend to let her know that he was ok and would be home shortly, Beals said. Before he was taken into custody, Grady was arrested for trespassing when he retrieved his tools from his vehicle at Prestige Towing, 1913 S. Jefferson. Two days later his body was found in a morgue.

"I saw his body," Grady-McGee said. "I knew it wasn't a heart attack when I saw his body. I saw the handcuff markings on his hand where the handcuffs had broken the skin. There is no defensive wounds on his arms and hands."

"Whoever did this should be brought to justice," Grady-McGee continued. "You don't just beat a person to death and walk away like you haven't done anything."

Beals said that the Grady family has requested a meeting with the



**Fred Grady pictured here at his nephew's wedding in July 2001, died last April from heart disease, according to officials from the Cook County Medical Examiners Office, but Grady's family members suspect that his death was caused by police brutality.**

**Grady was a professional musician who performed regularly at B.L.U.E.S. on Halsted. From 1972 to 1979, he was a member of The Higher Evolution of Music (T.H.E.M.), a seven-piece funk band that played in clubs nationwide. Grady also toured five nights a week with various blues artists including Otis Clay, John Lee Hooker, and Buddy Guy.**

Chicago Police Department (CPD), Cook County Medical Examiner's Office, and the Office of Professional Standards (OPS), but all requests have been refused.

"Members of the Grady family think it is a matter of professional sensitivity to deal with some of their questions," he said. "This is not a situation where someone went into police custody and their arm was broken. This is a situation where a death resulted. It is a pretty, serious situation."

Grady-McGee said she previously called the OPS because the CPD never notified the family of Grady's death. "We did everything that we could do," she said. "All we knew was that he had a car accident. The police didn't bother to tell us. So we found him on our own."

Calls were made to the OPS, but they were not returned by this newspaper's presstime.

Calls were also made to Pat Camden, a CPD spokesperson.

Camden said he does not understand why the Grady family is making the accusations of police brutality and refused to comment further.

Moore also said he sent two written requests to the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office regarding for all autopsy records. The letters were dated April 21 and May 20, respectively. Both letters went unanswered, Beals said.

"I don't understand why anyone won't someone sit and talk with us," Moore said. "We went from OPS, to all the police departments and the medical examiner's office. It just doesn't make sense to me. I don't understand."

Beals said the body had been embalmed without the Grady's family consent and knowledge. "There has already been an autopsy has been taken that confirmed these injuries," he said.

In response, an official from the Cook County Medical Examiners Office, who asked to remain anonymous, said an autopsy report has not been completed as of yet, but they did note that the cause of death is coronary arteriosclerosis heart disease.

When asked why an autopsy was performed without the family's consent, the official said:

"Under the medical examiner's ordinance, anybody that dies while under custody of law enforcement or a mental health institution, the office does an autopsy," the official said. "We don't require the permission, but we always try to respect the family's wishes."

An autopsy report will be scheduled for completion in approximately two weeks, said another official, who also asked to remain anonymous.

Rev. James L. Demus III, executive director of the South Side Branch NAACP, said the branch's mission is to address any complaints by citizens relative to such issues as discrimination, racism, and acts of violence.

"As a result, our legal department took up this issue that Mr. Beals is part of," he said. "We're calling on those agencies of the legal system to come forward to do their job. We want to know what happened to this brother."

*The official from the Cook County Medical Examiner's Office later called at this newspaper's press time to announce that Grady's autopsy report is now available for release to the family. The newspaper will keep readers informed of new details as they become available.*