

Grand jury indicts Semien for murder

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For James Battelli, the recent indictment of a man accused of the execution murder of his son is only raising more questions that he would like to gain answers to as the death of his son still haunts him.

A Fort Bend County Grand Jury indicted Earl Semien, 52, in connection with the Dec. 26, 2016 murder of Chris Battelli. The murder occurred at the Southland Ice House Bar on Stockdick Road in Katy.

Lingering questions still remain for Battelli family

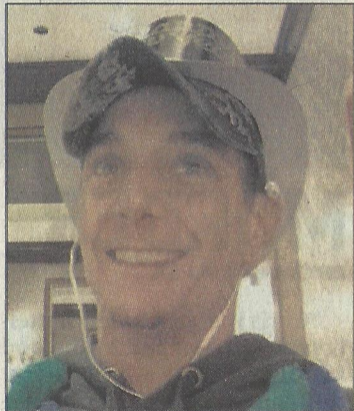
"I had complete faith that he would be indicted," Battelli said. "Now this is just the start of the justice process and we know it will be a long process. I am waiting to set up a meeting with the prosecutor in this case so that he can explain some stuff to me so that I can understand.

"I pray daily for God to re-

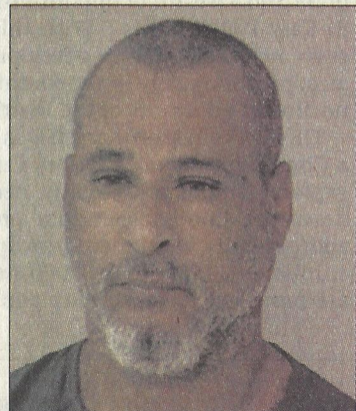
veal the truth about the whole case and I want to see justice served for everyone that was involved," Battelli said. "I don't believe that the truth for what happened that night has been fully exposed."

Battelli said he still misses his son on a daily basis.

■ **MURDER, please see 2A**



CHRIS BATTELLI



EARL SEMIEN



Courtesy photo
Chris Battelli
was murdered
on Christmas
Eve morning at
Southland Ice
House Bar.

MURDER

continued from 1A

"Chris was awesome," Battelli said. "He was full of life and full of love. He was a generous, caring and a giving person. He always wanted to help people and that was just his nature. He had tons of friends at No Label and this whole thing is like a bad dream that you think you are going to wake up from it but it just doesn't happen."

Chris Battelli was an Iraqi war veteran and comes from a military family.

For Battelli, he wants to see justice done for his son but he also questions why the other two suspects in the case have not been charged for their alleged involvement in the murder.

"If you watch the video, Chris goes out to his car and is smoking a cigarette with his car running looking at his phone and probably fixing to come home," Battelli said. "Two guys go out and the woman goes out and then goes back in. Then she comes back out and the three of them leave."

"My gut is telling me that there is something that just hasn't come out," Battelli said.

Chris Battelli was attending a Christmas party on Friday, Dec. 23 when he was allegedly contacted via text by the Sheila Semien, the sister of the accused murderer to come over to Southland Ice House for a drink after the party.

"I don't have the verbage of the text because (Katy Police) has not returned his phone to me but I believe it was come to the bar for a drink," Battelli said. "Sheila and Chris had a history. I have more than 15 months of phone records showing calls from each other."

"She is supposed to be his friend," Battelli said. "The

whole thing seems pre-meditated. He was ambushed. He didn't even know it was coming."

Battelli was sitting in his vehicle in the Southland Ice House parking lot when Semien allegedly pulled a .380 caliber handgun and shot Battelli in the head.

"The way he was executed and his life was taken, I think the case should be a capital murder case," Battelli said.

On Saturday, Dec. 24, Battelli was awoken by texts and calls from Chris' girlfriend seeking to find out where Chris was at that morning.

"I checked his room and went over to the shop because I figured he was at the shop," Battelli said. "When his car wasn't there, one of the guys there said they had heard something happened at Southland last night and that (police) had Chris' car."

"I drove over to Southland and I must have just missed them pulling the car out of there," Battelli said. "I went back to the shop and still nothing so I then went to the Katy Police station and told them I was looking for my son and that is when I found what had happened to Chris."

In the Semien indictment, which has been obtained by The Katy Times, it states "Earl James Semien, on Dec. 24, 2016 did then and there intentionally or knowingly cause the death of an individual, namely, Christopher Battelli, by shooting him with a deadly weapon, a firearm...and caused the death of Christopher Battelli."

The first hearing date for Semien has been set for Feb. 23 in the Fort Bend County courthouse.