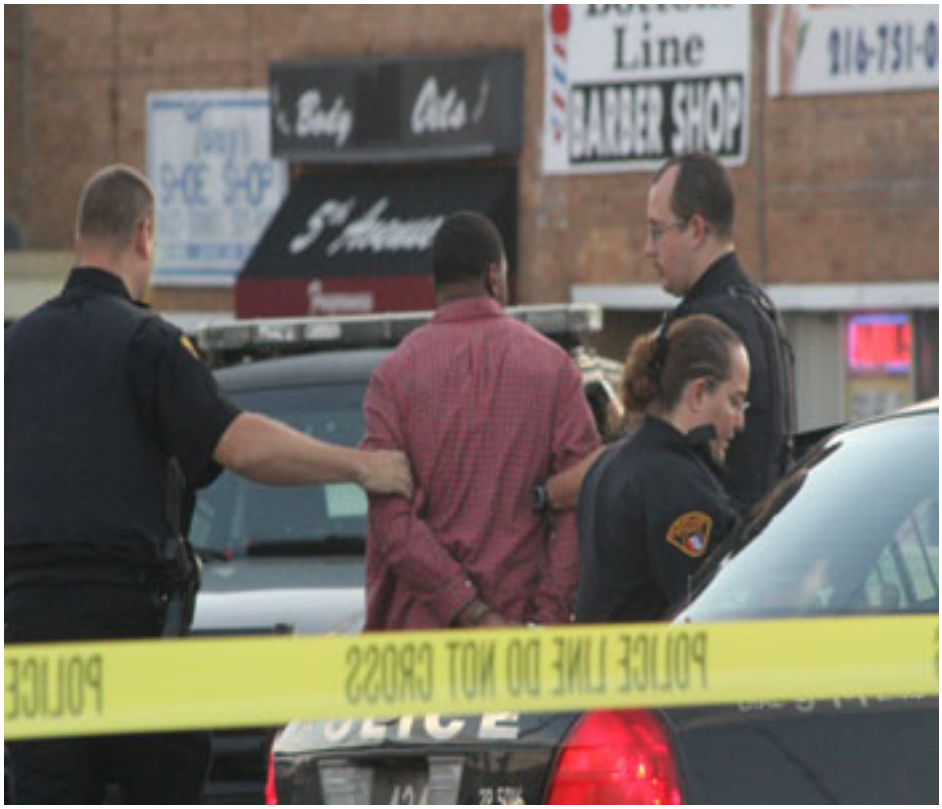

Guns in the hands of our youth have become the “in” thing, and with all the gun violence many are losing their lives even before they get to the age of 20.

By JAMES W. WADE III
Staff Reporter

Another weekend of violence has taken place in the city ofClevelandwith youth in their 20s dying from the deadly use of guns. The Cleveland Division of Police Homicide Unit is investigating the circumstances surrounding the death of a 21-year-old Black male who died early Monday morning after shots rang out in a parking lot located atLee RoadandJudson Drive southofHarvard Avenue.

The parking lot where the incident occurred seem to have been a gathering place for many after the long running club the Sir Rah House closed at 2:15 a.m. Shortly after is when Fourth District

officers observed a large fight taking place at approximately2:25 a.m.

During the fight, another Black male – Anthony Conner, 27 – produced a handgun and fired several shots in the officers' direction and into the crowd hitting the victim four times in the chest. After firing the shots, the suspect attempted to flee the scene. Officers pursued the suspect ordering him to stop. He did not comply. During the pursuit, Conner reached into his waistband on two occasions, turned towards the officers and then discharged his weapon.

This takes the homicide count to 54 inClevelandand makes citizens wonder if this murder was really necessary. One witness, Darren Bailey, said "we heard the guns being fired and was woke when he was running from the police. This neighborhood is a close knit area and everybody around here knows everybody."

The officers were able to apprehend the male and recovered a handgun on the scene. While in pursuit of the suspect one officer discharged his service weapon twice. The suspect was not hit.

The victim was conveyed by EMS toMetroHealthMedicalCenter, where he expired from his injuries. "We have at least 10 officers on duty to cover both floors," said Sir Rah House operator Darvin.

Talking to other young people, this parking lot has become a gathering place after the clubs let out. It was explained that the club patrons go to Taco Bell, Rallys, McDonald's and Dunkin Donuts – all on each corner – then convene at the parking lot to eat and hang out.

"We still reserve the right not to let some in the Sir Rah House, if their pants are hanging down or they seem to be ready to start trouble. Even if they are 21, I still have that right not to let them in," said Darvin.

To start the weekend off, at approximately 10:51 p.m. last Friday, Aug. 17, police responded to a call for a male shot in the 13000 block ofArgus Avenuein the Collinwood area. When they arrived on the scene, officers located the victim with a gunshot wound to the chest.

EMS was notified, responded to the scene and transferred the victim toMetroHealthMedicalCenter, where he later expired from his injuries. The Cleveland Division of Police Homicide Unit is investigating the circumstances surrounding the death of the Black male who was 20 years old.

The preliminary investigation reveals that the victim was standing in the 13400 block ofKelso Avenuewith a group of people when a white Buick Century (LP: FKD9646) stopped in front of the group. At this time a Black male that was known by the victim exited the vehicle and started shooting at the victim. The victim fled and was chased by the suspect. As the victim fled, the suspect continued to shoot at him. The victim collapsed in the 13000 block ofArgus Avenueand was found to have a gunshot wound to the chest. Subsequent to the shooting the suspect fled the scene in the white Buick Century.

“The weather has probably played a big part for all the killings,” said an unidentified person passing by the Judson-Lee intersection while looking at all the police. Guns in the hands of our youth have become the “in” thing, and with all the gun violence many are losing their lives even before they get to the age of 20.