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By JAMES W. WADE III

Staff Reporter

While people were home preparing for a Merry Christmas, police in Cleveland and East Cleveland were involved Thursday night in two unrelated homicide cases.

Cleveland police were notified at 5:38 p.m., of a 49-year-old male stabbed numerous times in the neck and back. When police arrived at an apartment on Lake Avenue near West 101st Street, police spokesman Sgt. Sammy Morris said the man was already dead.

Morris said a neighbor called police after attempting to contact the victim. The neighbor entered the apartment and found him stabbed.

Police would not release the name of the victim since next of kin had not been notified. An autopsy will be performed today by the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office.

There are no suspects at this time. Police are asking anyone with information to call their homicide unit at 216-623-5464.

In East Cleveland, 17 year-old Demetri Mayers was found shot in a residence on the 14000 block of Elderwood Avenue. Police Sgt. Scott Gardner said the man was taken to MetroHealth Medical Center, where he was pronounced dead a short time later.

Violence among our youth is out of control, each week more teens are dying at hands of another teen. Mayers had planned to go to Atlanta to visit his mother for the holiday.

Friday night the Cleveland Police had a rough night after five shootings happened. The first one happened just before 10:30 p.m. Police say Byron Oliver was shot on the 12300 block of Chesterfield Avenue. In the early stages of the investigation, police say Oliver was walking home when a black car pulled up next to him. The driver asked Oliver if his name was BJ. When Oliver said yes, the suspect pulled a gun and shot Oliver in the shoulder.

The second shooting happened at 11 p.m. Friday. Cleveland Police say Roberick Mason was shot twice while waiting for a friend in his driveway.

The third happened just after 1 a.m. Saturday, when police responded after a man reportedly shot himself. The man was trying to secure his hand gun when it went off and struck him in the leg.

Just before 2 a.m. Saturday, police say one woman was shot in the elbow in the fourth shooting of the night. The victim and her boyfriend were walking on E.123rd Street when two males jumped out of a red, two-door Pontiac Grand Am and opened fire. She was taken to Marymount Hospital where she was treated and released.

Ten minutes later police went to the 7300 block of Broadway Avenue for the shooting number five. Cleveland Police say Leon Stallings was getting gas at a Marathon when someone grabbed his necklace from his neck and ran. Stallings chased the man down and the two began to fight. That's when the suspect shot Stallings in the shoulder.

A regional gun buyback in the Cleveland area has collected a record 706 weapons surpassing buybacks in 2007, 2008 and 2010. A total of over 700 firearms are now off the streets, thanks to the 2011 Multi-Community Greater Cleveland Gun Buy-Back event.

Anyone with any information on any of these shootings are asked to contact the Cleveland Police Department or anonymous information can be given to Crime Stoppers by calling 216.252.7463 or Text messaging to Text TIP657 plus your message to Crimes (274637).