

# THE ORANGE COUNTY BETA REGISTER

## Vigil marks 1 year since police killed man

By [ERIC CARPENTER](#)

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ANAHEIM - One year after 20-year-old Julian Alexander stepped outside his home to investigate an unusual noise and was shot dead by an Anaheim police officer, his friends and family gathered at the site of his death to remember him and honor his life.

About 70 friends and family members lit candles, said prayers and sang Wednesday night outside the family home on Muller Street in Anaheim.

Among them were Alexander's widow, Renee, and their daughter, Maylia, who was born six weeks after her father's death.

Renee fought back tears as she thanked those who attended the vigil.

"We weren't sure how we'd get through this day," Julian's mother, Sheryl Bell, said in an interview. "We want to thank everyone for the prayers and support over the past year.

"The way people have embraced us and shared with us how Julian touched their lives has meant so much," she added. "I'm just so proud of who he was."

Alexander's family members are involved in a wrongful-death and civil-rights lawsuit against Anaheim.

Earlier this year, they sued the city and requested that a statue of Alexander be placed inside Disneyland to honor him.

The statue request never gained traction, but the court case is before a U.S. District Court judge in Santa Ana and is expected to go to a jury trial in fall 2010, according to their attorney, Richard Herman.

On Oct. 28, 2008, Alexander stepped out of his house carrying a stick that the family kept by the door for protection. Family members said he was investigating a commotion, which was later determined to be four juvenile burglary suspects fleeing a police pursuit.

At some point, the police officer – later identified as 10-year veteran Kevin Flanagan – drew his weapon and fired at Alexander, who died at the scene.

It was later determined that Alexander was not guilty of any crime and had been a bystander to the initial chase.

After a five-month investigation, the District Attorney's Office determined that the officer felt threatened by Alexander's raised voice and failure to put down the stick, which has been described by law enforcement as looking like a thick club. The D.A. decided not to press charges against Flanagan, who returned to work.

The family's suit claims that Flanagan approached Alexander without probable cause to believe he had committed or would commit a crime. Then without warning "repeatedly and unjustifiably discharged his department-issued firearm. ...

"Following the shooting, the involved officers denied medical care to Mr. Alexander in a manner that demonstrated deliberate indifference to his constitutional rights," the suit goes on to say.

Attorneys for Anaheim have denied wrongdoing.

The suit asks for damages, including for funeral expenses, medical expenses, legal costs and for undetermined general and punitive damages.

Some of those in attendance at Wednesday's vigil included former classmates and teammates on Alexander's football team at Riverside's Notre Dame High School.

"The school is a family. And when something bad happens to one, it happens to all," said Julie Ann Duncan, the mother of two boys who played football with Alexander. "We want the family to know we haven't forgotten.

"We all still feel it," she said.

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