

Vicki Lynn Becton (McKinney), Class of 1981.



Victim Caught in August Cross-fire Dies.

Charges on two teens to be up. The 32-year-old victim of last months crossfire at a Whitehaven convenience store died Thursday in the hospital where she had languished since a bullet struck her in the head.

Charges pending against the two teenagers arrested in the crime are expected to be upgraded to include

murder, police said.

Vicki McKinney died at the Regional Medical Center at Memphis Thursday morning. Her family said doctors there worked aggressively to save her, but that even with help of life-support machines, she was unable to survive her wounds.

"We knew the prognosis was grim," said her mother. Yvonne Becton, "But we always believed there was a chance. I believe in God, and I thought that maybe she would make it."

McKinney had tried to speed away from a shootout at Dodge's Store on August 26. Three children were with her in the car when McKinney saw young men aiming pistols at one another, the violent fallout of a mugging attempt, police said. She accelerated toward Elvis Presley Boulevard, screaming for the children to lie down. But a bullet caught her anyway.

The car charged 200 yards down the street and struck a pole on the opposite side. The wreck injured her two daughters and another boy. Nine-year-old Kendra McKinney fractured her collarbone, Kenya McKinney, 13, suffered a concussion, and 6-year-old Marino Jett fractured a facial bone.

John Alford Donald, the 16-year-old son of General Sessions Court Judge John A. Donald, was arrested by police hours after the shooting. Then last week, police caught the alleged partner who fired the fatal shot. Derenzy Timothy Turner, aged 18, is being held on charges of attempted, especially aggravating, robbery and two counts of attempting first-degree murder. Charges against Donald are one count of attempted aggravating robbery and two counts of attempted murder.

The gun was Donald's police said.

They believe that when Donald tried to rob a man of two gold chains in the convenience store restroom, he struggled with his intended victim. Donald tossed the weapon aside to keep the victim from taking it from him and Turner found it and picked it up. But by then the 28-year-old would be victim had retrieved a gun from the car in which he was riding.

That's when the shooting started and when McKinney tried to escape. "You know her children are very upset," Mrs. Becton said Thursday. "They always thought that there was a chance that their mama was coming home."

The teenagers charged in her daughter's shooting were weighing on her mind too. "Parents, parents, hear my cry," Becton said. "We've got to take back control of our children." Information is from The Commercial Appeal, September 9, 1994.