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### Killer of BSO deputy Fatta gets life in federal prison

By Paula McMahon

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FORT LAUDERDALE

Kenneth Wilk was sentenced Wednesday to life in federal prison, without the chance of parole, for the Aug. 19, 2004, murder of Broward Sheriff's Deputy Todd Fatta and the attempted murder of another deputy.

Before the sentence was imposed, Wilk, 45, gave a 10-minute speech, reading from his notes.

While he apologized for killing Fatta and seriously injuring Lt. Angelo Cedeno, Wilk insisted he did not murder Fatta.

During his trial, Wilk argued that he mistook the deputies, who busted in his front door, for intruders and thought he was acting in self-defense when he shot them.

Fatta was killed by a single bullet, fired by Wilk, that pierced the deputy's protective vest while he was serving arrest and search warrants on Wilk's home in northeast Fort Lauderdale.

"Your honor, I am an innocent man, I have been wrongly convicted," Wilk said.

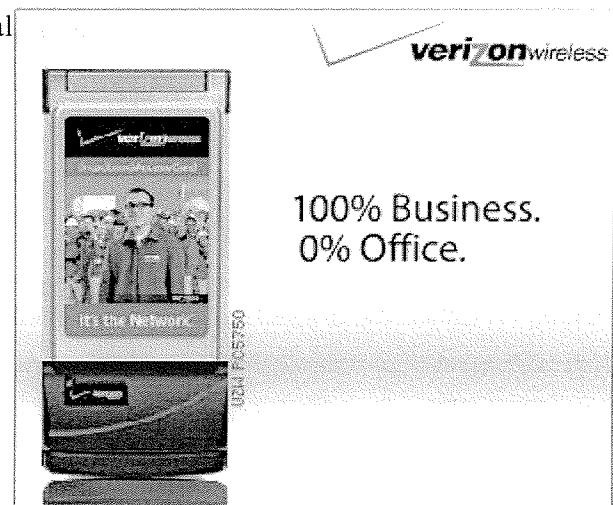
He reiterated allegations that the Broward Sheriff's Office, federal agents and the St. Lucie County Sheriff's Office botched the raid.

The victim's family has filed a civil suit against the Broward Sheriff's Office alleging that the raid was mishandled and that Fatta was placed in unnecessary danger.

Fatta's sister, Linda Kirtley, of West Palm Beach, was the only family member to attend the sentencing. She did not speak at the sentencing but said later that she was relieved that it was over. She declined to comment on Wilk's statements.

Cedeno, whose finger was blown off by a bullet, did not attend the sentencing.

U.S. District Judge James Cohn also imposed a \$25,000 fine on Wilk and ordered him to pay \$300,000 in reimbursement for the cost of his trial. Wilk's part ownership of his Imperial Point home is also being



forfeited.

Deputies shook their heads in disbelief and disgust when Wilk told Cohn that he would like the money from the forfeiture of his home to go to the reward fund for information leading to the person who shot Broward Sheriff's Sgt. Chris Reyka on Aug. 10 in Pompano Beach.

Wilk said he wanted the money, which he estimated is about \$140,000, to go to find what he called the "legitimate cop killer" of Reyka.

"It's despicable to think that we would accept blood money from the killer of one of our deputies to help find the killer of another of our deputies," said Elliot Cohen, a spokesman for the Broward Sheriff's Office.

Wilk previously said he wanted the money to go to the Fatta family, but he fought the forfeiture effort. The money is expected to go to the federal government to help offset the cost of prosecuting Wilk.

Wilk's attorneys, Bill Matthewman and Rafael Rodriguez, said they plan to appeal Wilk's conviction and sentence.

Earlier this year, they persuaded a jury to vote against the death sentence for Wilk. Federal prosecutors had hoped Wilk would be the first person in recent history to be sentenced to the federal death penalty in Florida.

"The real fight in this case was the death penalty issue and we won the death penalty issue and the government lost it," Matthewman said.

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