Lehman College

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Seaford Pharmacy Shooting

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Residents shocked by shooting

By Aisha Al-Muslim

Residents, diners and shoppers in Seaford stood shocked on downtown sidewalks yesterday as police investigated a drugstore robbery that left the suspected robber and a federal agent shot to death.

Anthony Choriatis, 73, of Seaford, who said he has been a customer of Charlie’s Family Pharmacy for four years, worried about the store’s owner, Charles Laquidara, who appeared uninjured in the robbery.

Choriatis said he waved to Laquidara, who stood in the back of the store during the investigation. “I come here almost every day,” said Choriatis, who was on his way to pick up prescriptions at the pharmacy. “I thank God I wasn’t here before this happened.”

He said he had worried that the small, family-owned store would be robbed some day.

“That’s why I come in the back way — because I am too scared to come in through the front,” he said.

The suspected robber was shot as he left the pharmacy through the front door, police said.

Tara Lerose, 33, of Seaford, said she was at work in the nearby Pathmark supermarket when a co-worker came in looking as if “he had seen a ghost.” He had heard the shooting, she said.

“This is Seaford — stuff like this doesn’t happen here,” she said.

But others weren’t surprised, saying crime has been increasing.

Sean Grimmer, 21, of Warren, Pa., left Seaford about eight years ago, but came back for the holidays to visit his father, he said.

He was driving to his father’s house, about four blocks away, when he came across the crime scene.

“I moved out of Long Island for this reason,” Grimmer said, looking at the yellow police tape and investigating officers. “The crime rate is getting ridiculous. You can’t walk down the street without watching your back.”

Grimmer was one of more than 100 people standing on Merrick Road, watching the scene that drew dozens of police officers, patrol cars and ambulances.

Joanie Schalk, a 38-year resident of Massapequa, was driving toward the block of shops and restaurants when she kept getting cut off by police cruisers and detectives trying to get to the pharmacy, she said.

“It doesn’t surprise me anymore,” Schalk said. “The crime rate has skyrocketed . . . I feel bad for the parents who are going to get a knock on their door.”
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Federal agent, suspect killed in Seaford