

## FEISTY 90 YEAR OLD LOCKS STUBBORN OFFICER IN BASEMENT – DEPARTMENT PAYS \$95,000 TO SETTLE SUIT



In a rather strange, bordering on the bizarre, police brutality lawsuit, a 90-year old resident of Baltimore Venus Green was awarded a \$95,000 settlement for an incident in 2009, when she locked up a police officer in the basement of her home. Three Police Officers had come to her home, following the shooting of her grandson Tallie. In spite of repeated pleas from Green that her grandson had been shot at a convenience store, the police were adamant that, either she had shot her grandson, or that he had shot himself. One of the officers, then forced his way into her home, without a valid search warrant, and went to the basement where Tallie lived, hoping to find evidence of their allegations. The officer incensed that she asked him not to enter her house, allegedly said, "I'm going to find that gun. I'm going to prove that you did it." Green told WBAL television that the officer jostled her, pushed her over a chair, handcuffed her and insulted her. When the officer went into her basement, she says she shut the door and locked him inside. The scuffle with the officer left her with a dislocated shoulder. "They treated me like a criminal," she said. She said that all her requests to allow the ambulance to treat her injured grandson fell on deaf ears. She later filed a civil rights lawsuit, seeking \$6 million in damages. However after a deal between her and city lawyers it was settled with an offer of \$95,000 in early April, which she accepted. She told WBAL, "I'm a law-abiding citizen. I've never been arrested, I paid my taxes, owned my home, my husband died 34 years ago. I raised my son and I have been brutally abused. I feel like the police department needs to go back to school." WBAL reports that the settlement to Green for police brutality by the city of Baltimore is not an isolated case. The city has shelled out nearly \$17 million over the last two years in such settlements. The city has spent \$10.4 million in legal costs, defending lawsuits in the court. A couple who charged that they were unlawfully searched and harassed by police looking for drugs have been approved for \$155,000, and a motorcyclist who was struck by a Baltimore cop is to be given \$115,000. Venus Green for her feisty ways has become 'part of Baltimore lore.' Stevenson University assistant professor Heather Harris called her a "fierce angel", an observable reference to a book by Sheri Parks, where she uses the phrase to "to describe an African-American woman who is almost impossibly strong and selfless." Defending her decision to take the law into her own hands and locking the door, she said, "This was my private home, and if I latched it, that was my prerogative because he had no search warrant to go in my basement. So, I had to right to latch it" Baltimore City Council President Bernard Young voted against the settlement for Ms. Green, explaining that he was "tired of the police department bleeding money."

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