



PHOTOS BY JEFF BACHNER

Demonstrators march from Mineola to Garden City yesterday to protest the alleged beating of Ronald Lanier by Garden City police officers at a supermarket Wednesday.

# Protest against alleged beating

■ 150 march, rally outside Garden City police HQ

■ Retired correction officer says police struck him

BY VALERIE BAUMAN  
valerie.bauman@newsday.com

About 150 people yesterday marched from the Western Beef Supermarket in Mineola to Garden City police headquarters, where they protested the alleged police beating of a retired Nassau County correction officer.

Ronald Lanier, who is black, said he was shopping Wednesday at the Western Beef when two white police officers mistook him for a shoplifting suspect. He said they approached him from behind, threw him to the ground and handcuffed him before beating him. Lanier has said he was treated for bruises at Winthrop-University Hospital in Mineola.

Lanier, 53, said yesterday that Garden City police should discipline the officers for their actions, and that promises of retraining officers was not enough. "What I want out of this is for

the officers to be held accountable for their actions," Lanier said. "I'm tired of the department . . . stating when an officer does something wrong . . . 'We need to retrain the officers.' It's not about retraining, it's about making them be held accountable for their actions."

Lanier's family was present to support him during the demonstration, before which protesters marched about 1½ miles, and several said events have been devastating.

"He [Ronald Lanier] is really struggling right now," said his sister, Denise Lanier of Baldwin. "It feels like a flashback to Jim Crow laws. Who are you going to scream to when the person that you scream to does not protect you?"

Lanier's attorney, Frederick K. Brewington of Hempstead, said the officers involved should be fired.

"They never talked to him

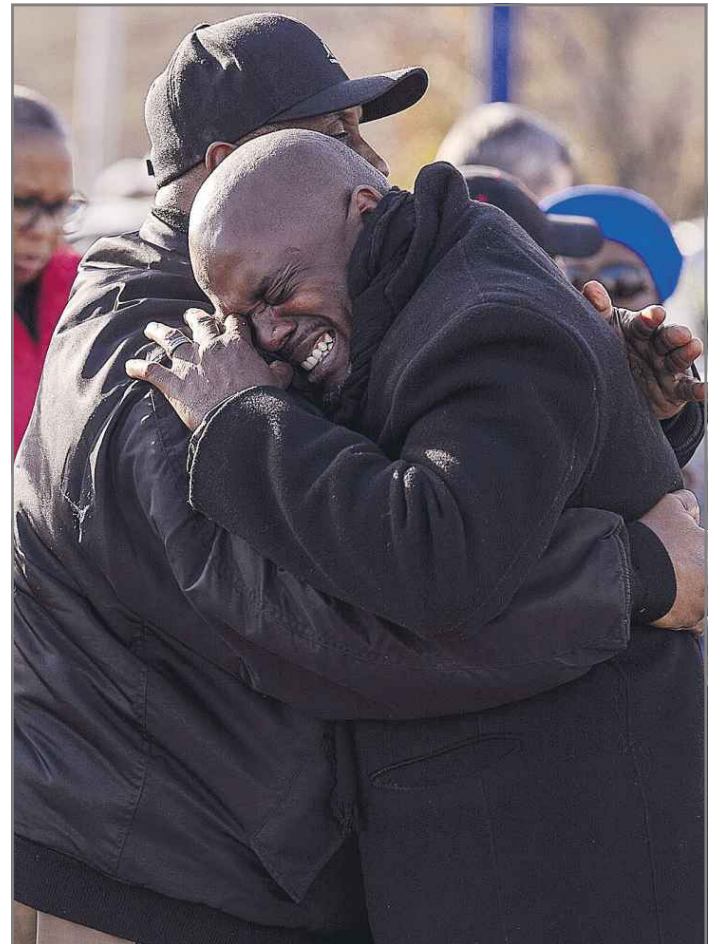
[Lanier] to make sure he was the right person," Brewington said. "The abuse he suffered at their hands — it was like they were beating an animal. We want them to not be disciplined, we want them to be completely taken out of police work. They need to lose their jobs."

An officer reached yesterday at the Garden City Police Department said its policy is for any response or release to be issued through Nassau County police. A spokesman for that department had no comment. Garden City Mayor Nicholas P. Episcopia, on the advice of the village attorney, declined to comment on any potential litigation.

Brewington also called for state Attorney General Eric T. Schneiderman to investigate the Garden City Police Department. Calls and emails to Schneiderman's office late yesterday were not immediately returned.

Lanier said he identified himself as a fellow law enforcement officer during the incident, but that did nothing to stop the beating.

"I told them and they let it fall on deaf ears," he said. "It



Lanier sobs before the march. ■ Video: [newsday.com/nassau](http://newsday.com/nassau)

was trauma, I was shocked. And all that came across my mind was [shooting victim] Sean Bell and the other people . . . that didn't have a chance . . . I had all these credentials, and it didn't even matter."

Lanier, who served in the

Army and volunteered at Ground Zero after 9/11, has notified the Garden City Police Department and Garden City Village that he intends to sue.

Brewington said he had already filed a notice of a claim on Lanier's behalf.