



News Release No. 4
For Immediate Release: March 14, 2011

VIRGINIA STATE POLICE INVESTIGATE FATAL SHOOTINGS IN BUCHANAN COUNTY

RICHMOND – The Virginia State Police is continuing its investigation into Sunday's shooting incident that seriously injured two Buchanan County Deputy Sheriffs, and claimed the lives of two other Buchanan County Deputy Sheriffs. The assailant, Randy Gilbert Newberry, 52, of Vansant, was also shot and killed.

At approximately 3 p.m. Sunday (March 13, 2011), the owner of Rogers Service Center, a salvage business, on Route 620 in Vansant called 911 concerning a larceny in progress on his property. Upon arriving at the business, two Buchanan County Deputy Sheriffs Eric Dwayne Rasnake and Shane Earl Charles began their search for the larceny suspect, Newberry, and investigating the larceny. Within minutes, the two deputies were shot multiple times from a distance by a high-powered rifle. Both were able to crawl to a nearby residence in attempt to take cover and call for help.

Additional sheriff's deputies and the Virginia State Police responded immediately to the scene. As a perimeter was being established to contain and search for the active shooter, Deputy Sheriffs Cameron Neil Justus and William Ezra Stiltner were shot and killed by a high-powered rifle.

At this point, the shooter left his hiding place on the ridge in the wood-line and ran to another nearby residence about a quarter of a mile up the road from the salvage business. Police tracked Newberry to the house and found him in the front yard talking on cell phone. They repeatedly told him to put up his hands and get on the ground. Newberry stayed on the cell phone with his back to the officers and ignored their commands. When he did turn around he pulled out and aimed a handgun at the officers. He was subsequently shot. Newberry died at the scene.

The Virginia State Police Bureau of Criminal Investigation's Wytheville Field Office is conducting the investigation into the incidents. A search of the area around the business revealed Newberry's sniper location on a ridge in the wood-line overlooking the property. Multiple cartridge casings from a high-powered rifle were recovered at that location. Several police vehicles at the scene of the salvage property had also been shot.

Virginia State Police, Russell County Sheriff's Office, Tazewell County Sheriff's Office, Wise County Sheriff's Office, U.S. Marshals Service and FBI responded to the scene Sunday to assist with the search and investigation.

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Regional Media Contacts

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Media Release



Buchanan County Deputy Sheriff Cameron Neil Justus, 41, of Hurley, Va., and Buchanan County Deputy Sheriff William Ezra Stiltner, 46, of Maxie, Va., both died at the scene. A 10-year veteran of the Buchanan County Sheriff's Office, Deputy Justus is survived by a wife, daughter, and step-son. A seven-year veteran of the Buchanan County Sheriff's Office, Deputy Stiltner is survived by a wife and two children.

Buchanan County Deputy Sheriff Eric Dwayne Rasnake, 32, of Jewell Ridge, Va., remains in ICU at the Bristol Regional Medical Center in Bristol, Tenn. Buchanan County Deputy Sheriff Shane Earl Charles, 25, of Maxie, Va., is being treated at Holston Valley Medical Center in Kingsport, Tenn. Both deputies are listed in critical condition.

A "Deputy Relief Fund" has been set up to aid all four of the victims and their families through the Grundy National Bank. For more information, please contact Ms. Bonnie Barnette at Grundy National Bank, 460 Riverside Drive, Grundy, Va. 24614, or at 276-935-8111x232.

The Buchanan County Sheriff's Office has 33 sworn officers, with a total of 46 sworn and civilian employees. The last time a Buchanan County Deputy Sheriff was killed in the line of duty was approximately 40 years ago.

The public is invited to attend a candlelight vigil Monday night, March 14, at the Buchanan County Courthouse in Grundy at 7 p.m. Local churches will also be open to the public for those in need of support.

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