



MEDIA RELEASE

Ralph E. Ogden
Sheriff of Yuma County

141 S. 3rd Avenue, Yuma, AZ 85364
Tel: (928) 783-4427 • Fax: (928) 329-0309
www.yumacountysheriff.org

Contact: Major Leon Wilmot or Captain Eben Bratcher
Phone: (928) 783-4427
DR# 2011-125661

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
9:50 AM, January 20, 2012

Reported Homicide

*** UPDATE ***

Location of Incident: 22300 block of East County 8th Street, Yuma, Arizona

On 12/23/11 at approximately 1:30 p.m., the Yuma County Sheriff's Office responded to the 22300 block of East 8th Street in the Dome Valley area of Yuma County in regards to a male subject calling the Sheriff's Office to report that he had just shot his wife who was reportedly ill and wanted this agency to know and hung up the phone.

Officers of the Yuma County Sheriff's Office and the Wellton Police Department arrived on the scene and upon pulling up to the residence heard reports of gun fire coming from the residence. One vehicle was struck with a unknown caliber bullet and officers secured the scene until other units could arrive on scene.

Several more rounds of gunfire were heard coming from the interior of the residence followed by a large explosion from the interior of the residence.

One deputy was transported from the scene by Tri valley Ambulance to Yuma Regional Medical Center as a result of the explosion knocking him to the ground from the blast. He was treated and released with minor injuries.

The Special Response Team of the Sheriff's Office responded to the scene and upon clearing the exterior of the residence escorted the fire units to the residence to extinguish the fire. While doing so they encountered what appears to be a homemade unexploded device near the residence. At this time the area has been secured and members of the Yuma County Sheriff's Office Explosive Ordinance Disposal team will be clearing the remainder of the residence.

The reported victim and suspect in this case have not been identified at this time and the Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations unit is currently investigating this case.

Anyone with knowledge concerning this case is asked to contact the Yuma County Sheriff's Office at (928) 783-4427.

UPDATE: 12-25-2011

The Yuma County Sheriff's Office EOD Team was able to clear the exterior of the residence and was able to ascertain that there were no hazards existing around the building. Entry to the main portion of the residence was delayed due to the center main portion of the residence being constructed of brick, concrete and rebar with security doors as well as an interior steel door with steel pins. All windows were also built of heavy steel which restricted entry.

With the assistance of Tri Valley and the Wellton Fire Department, Sheriff's Office Investigators were able to gain entry and found the interior of the main bedroom and living room heavily damaged from the explosion and fire with the roof of the residence caved in on top of the scene.

At this time we have two decedents located inside the residence along with two dogs. Investigators also located fifteen (15), five (5) gallon propane bottles located within the interior where the individuals were located and two of these propane bottles have what appears to be bullet holes in them indicating that the explosion was intentional.

Due to the condition of the decedents located within the residence, they will be transported for forensic autopsy to determine cause of death and for possible identification which cannot be done at this point due to their condition.

Anyone with information concerning this case is asked to contact the Yuma County Sheriff's Office at (928) 783-4427.

UPDATE: 01-20-2012

Positive Identification of the decedents in this case was obtained from the Forensic Autopsy performed in Tucson at the Pima County Medical Examiner's Office which confirmed that the two individuals located within the residence were Jesse Lee Firestone 65 years of age and Diedre Firestone 45 years of age. The cause of death was listed as suicide from intentional blast and from thermal Injuries.

Investigation of this case revealed that both parties had planned to commit suicide together after luring deputies to their residence in an attempt to shoot them. The Firestones also planned to wait for the Sheriff's Office Special Response Team to arrive and take them out as well by intentionally blowing the residence up as the Special Response Team entered.

The investigation uncovered the elaborate plans which were documented in written format and video format by the Firestones and left in a blast protected area inside the residence. The motive behind the plan is not known but it was clear that the Firestones intended to injure or kill as many Deputies as possible prior to taking their own lives.

Information Released By: Major Leon Wilmot