



OFFICE OF
Steve Boyer

KITSAP COUNTY SHERIFF

614 DIVISION ST. MS-37 • PORT ORCHARD, WASHINGTON 98366 • (360) 337-5698 • FAX 337-4923

For immediate release:
KCSO news release #06-019 / 125

Tuesday, May 2, 2006

South Kitsap stand-off resolved peacefully

Port Orchard, Wash. – The Kitsap County Sheriff's Office Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) Team resolved a critical incident situation successfully last night, following an armed encounter with a local resident.

Three Sheriff's patrol deputies responded to an address in the 3000 block of Menzies Road SE, South Kitsap, around 5:30 p.m., Monday, May 1, following a 911 call to Kitsap County Central Communications (CenCom) of a man firing a gun from a travel trailer located at the rear of the residential property.

The man who allegedly fired the gun, later identified as Bernard D. Rutledge, age 74, was reported to have been in an argument concerning an alleged trespassing dispute. When the responding deputies attempted contact with Rutledge he refused their verbal orders; instead Rutledge reached inside of a boat, retrieved a small caliber rifle and fired multiple shots from the rifle at the deputies.

One patrol deputy returned gunfire and all three took tactical positioning that afforded cover protection. Rutledge disappeared inside of the travel trailer.

Additional Sheriff's patrol deputies and a Washington State Patrol trooper responded to the area as back-up cover units. While in positions of containment around the suspect's trailer, Rutledge again fired shots from his rifle at the deputies and the trooper at approximately 6:45 p.m.

Once the Sheriff's Office SWAT Team was assembled a plan was developed, which included relieving the patrol containment units surrounding the trailer. A Sheriff's Office negotiator was positioned to initiate verbal communication contact with Rutledge utilizing a mobile public address system, as there was no telephone service to the suspect's trailer.

Following a lengthy negotiation effort, without any verbal response from Rutledge, the suspect suddenly emerged from the trailer, unarmed, and surrendered to SWAT personnel at 9:40 p.m.

Rutledge was examined by medics from South Kitsap Fire & Rescue and cleared for release; he was transported to the main Sheriff's Office at the county courthouse in Port Orchard. Following an interview with detectives, Rutledge was booked into jail on five counts of assault, 1st degree (deadly weapon) with bail set initially at \$1 million.

Rutledge made an initial appearance in Kitsap County Superior Court at 3:00 p.m. today, where the judge reduced his bail amount to \$500,000. He will be formally charged later this week.

No law enforcement personnel were injured during the encounter.

“Professionalism, coupled with the results of hundreds of hours of training, brought this serious incident to a safe conclusion,” said Sheriff Steve Boyer. “Our first priority is for the safety of the community, followed immediately by officer safety and then consideration for the offender. The goal is to resolve an incident such as this without loss of life, but our patrol deputies have to react to the circumstances of the situation as they occur, utilizing the extensive training they have received over the years. We had the best resources and personnel on-scene. It is very fortunate that the outcome resulted with no loss of life or injury. I could not be prouder of the patrol deputies, the on-scene negotiator and the SWAT Team for their hard work in this difficult situation.”

A collateral investigation into this incident is being conducted by Sheriff’s Office detectives and criminal investigators from the Washington State Patrol.

#