



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 #07-039 / 125 / 45

Thursday, Sept. 13, 2007

South Kitsap man faces felony assault charge following injury to school bus driver

Port Orchard, Wash. -- An 18 year-old South Kitsap man is now in custody, charged with felony assault, following an investigation into the shooting of a school bus driver last Friday.

The shooting occurred just after 4:00 p.m., Sept. 7, in the 1100 block of Nebraska Street SE, in South Kitsap.

The suspect, Robert E. Stowell, was arrested at his residence around noon, yesterday.

The victim, a 41 year-old woman employed by South Kitsap School District (SKSD), was on her scheduled bus route returning students home from Manchester Elementary School. While reaching for the bus radio microphone, the driver heard a "pop" sound and immediately felt the impact of a projectile in her left forearm. The driver did not see the shooter. She radioed for assistance and sheriff's deputies and officials from SKSD responded, along with a medic unit from South Kitsap Fire & Rescue.

No students were injured during the assault.

The projectile apparently was fired at the bus from the opposite side of the roadway. The projectile struck the bus driver after entering through the driver's open window.

SKSD dispatched a second school bus and relief driver to the scene, retrieved the students, and resumed the bus schedule and route.

The bus driver was treated by medics at the scene and subsequently examined and treated at a South Kitsap urgent care facility, where she had the projectile removed. The projectile, an air gun pellet, had been embedded approximately four inches into her arm. The victim later met with a sheriff's deputy and turned over the removed air gun pellet as evidence.

The initial investigation by patrol deputies resulted in the recovery of the weapon, a Daisy (brand) rifle style pellet gun, along with a rifle scope, and two cans of .177 caliber pellet ammunition. A possible suspect was identified. The case was turned over to sheriff's detectives for further follow-up investigation.

Sheriff's detectives continued with the investigation earlier this week and developed enough probable cause to arrest Stowell. He was transported and booked into Kitsap County Jail on a charge of assault, 2nd degree. Bail was set initially at \$100,000.

Stowell will make an initial appearance in Kitsap County Superior Court at 3:00 p.m. today.

#