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Man who attacked troopers dies

Author: Gina Gallucci News-Post Staff

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Article Text:

A Glenelg man who assaulted two Maryland State Police troopers on Dec. 7 in Mount Airy has died.

Anthony M. Casarella, 34, was pronounced dead about 5:30 a.m. Thursday at Frederick Memorial Hospital, police said. He had been on life support since police brought him to the hospital.

The cause of death is unknown, said MSP spokeswoman Elena Wendell. Casarella's body will be taken to the state Office of the Chief Medical Examiner in Baltimore for an autopsy.

Wendell did not know if he had a pre-existing condition that would have led to his death.

On Dec. 7, Casarella pushed, wrestled and kicked troopers and then tried to break through a wire partition in an officer's vehicle, police said. While taking him to the Frederick County Adult Detention Center, officials noticed he was having trouble breathing and had a low pulse.

Troopers were called about 3 a.m. Dec. 7 after Casarella went to a home in the 100 block of Plain View Drive in Mount Airy, police said. He asked the residents, whom he did not know, if he could use their telephone because his truck was not working.

The residents handed a phone to him while he was still outside, police said. Instead of calling a tow truck, he called 911.

Two troopers arrived and found Casarella, who appeared to be confused and disoriented, wearing a tank top and pants in below-freezing temperatures, police said. Troopers called his mother and other relatives, who went to the home and offered to help him. He refused and became violent, pushing his mother to the ground and throwing his brother to the ground. When troopers offered to help, he began pushing, wrestling and kicking them, police said. Casarella also tried to get one of the trooper's firearms, but failed.

A handcuffed Casarella was placed inside a Carroll County Sheriff's Office patrol car that had a wire partition, police said. He continued to be combative by kicking the patrol car door into a trooper, trying to break the car windows and attempting to breach the wire partition to get into the front seat. Plastic flex cuffs were then placed on his legs.

Troopers did not use pepper spray, police batons or Tasers on Casarella, police said.

Troopers found Casarella's Toyota pick-up truck near the home, police said. While troopers found a white powder substance in a container on the front seat of the truck, it tested negative for a narcotic.

The Dec. 7 incident was not the first time Casarella made an appearance at a Mount Airy home. Casarella broke into a home in the 500 block of Deer Hollow Road in mid-October, claiming he had been assaulted by several people he did not know. Casarella was not charged in that break-in.

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