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Section: Crime

Dale City man kills himself after eight-hour standoff

Author: Uriah A Kiser

Article Text:

Incident follows unrelated murder-suicide in Dumfries

DALE CITY — An armed man who held police at bay for more than eight hours shot and killed himself Sunday night.

Prince William County police found 34-year-old Lindale Thomas dead just before 7 p.m., when they entered the Dale City apartment where he was barricaded for much of the day. It appears he shot and killed himself, said Prince William police spokeswoman 1st Sgt. Kim Chinn.

Police evacuated the Dale Forest apartment complex on Darbydale Avenue at about 10 a.m. after the victim's wife notified police that he was acting strangely. Authorities were concerned that Thomas could fire his weapon, potentially shooting residents there.

Neighbors said they heard a commotion near his apartment the night prior. A neighbor said the man had been drinking alcohol for some time, though police would not confirm he had been drinking. Chinn said initial reports of the man firing his weapon at people in the parking lot were unfounded.

SWAT teams surrounded the man's apartment building and uniformed officers strapped with assault rifles were posted at various corners of the apartment complex.

Police began evacuating residents about an hour after the standoff began, and residents watched the spectacle from the sidewalk on Darbydale Avenue.

For much of the day the man stood in front of his apartment window, gun in hand, and taunted police, said April Moon, a resident who lived near Thomas.

Once the standoff was over, authorities said it would take at least an hour to move everyone back into their homes.

Thomas' death comes just three days after a couple was found shot to death inside their Dumfries home. Police believe their deaths are a result of a murder-suicide.

In an interview with the News & Messenger before their deaths, the couple said they were being evicted from their home of more than 10 years. They claimed their home went into foreclosure without notification from the mortgage company, and they were planning to move to be with family in Colorado.

Neighbors said one of the victims, a 52-year-old man, became distraught after he learned that not only was his job at a Fredericksburg wholesale club not being transferred to Colorado, the company suspended him from working.

The other victim, a 57-year-old woman who suffered from multiple health issues, had recently quit her job as a pharmacist in preparation for the move.

Uriah A. Kiser is a staff writer at Media General's News & Messenger.

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