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Planeview fracas ends with shooting of bounty hunter; Wichita police seeking suspect

By Stan Finger
The Wichita Eagle

Wichita police are looking for a 47-year-old man suspected of shooting a bounty hunter in the back during a dispute in Planeview on Wednesday night.

The victim, identified in police documents as 29-year-old William Poyner, is in stable condition today after undergoing surgery at Via Christi Hospital on St. Francis, Lt. Todd Ojile said. He was one of three bounty hunters who went to a house in the 3400 block of East Munger at about 7:15 p.m. in search of a 24-year-old woman who had a warrant out for her arrest.

They had been to the same house the night before and were allowed by the family there to search the house for the woman, Ojile said. But when they returned Wednesday night to look again, the family refused.

An argument broke out, he said, and it escalated until one of the bounty hunters used pepper spray on one or more of the people inside the house.

“We’re still trying to determine what prompted the bail bondsman to use pepper spray,” Ojile said.

The dispute then spilled out into the front yard, where the crowd was joined by two more men from next door who are related to some of the people in the house where the bounty hunters tried to search, Ojile said. Someone in the group picked up a large piece of concrete and threw it at one of the bounty hunters, prompting another bondsman to use a Taser on him.

“At that time an individual pulled a gun out,” Ojile said. “The bondsmen retreated from the scene. The individual fired two rounds. One we believe was up in the air. The other round was fired at the bondsman.”

Poyner was hit and taken by private vehicle to Via Christi Hospital on East Harry, and then immediately transferred to the St. Francis campus. The entire incident played out within five minutes, Ojile said.

The man suspected of firing the shots wasn’t at the house when police arrived.

“We know who he is,” Ojile said. “We’re currently looking for him.”

He’s related to people who live at the house on Munger, Ojile said.

A 24-year-old man was arrested this morning in connection with throwing the concrete at a bondsman. A 26-year-old man was arrested at the house Wednesday night for a parole violation.

Police are still reviewing the circumstances of the altercation, Ojile said.

“They cannot just start physically harming people, Macing people without justification,” he said, referring to the bounty hunters. “We’re still determining why they ended up Macing these individuals and how this all occurred.”

There are few rules in Kansas governing bounty hunters, Ojile said.

“They do have the right to defend themselves,” he said.

The two other bounty hunters with Poyner — a 41-year-old woman and a 27-year-old man — were not injured in the incident.

Police do not know the whereabouts of the 24-year-old woman who was the bounty hunters’ target. She is wanted for a misdemeanor offense in municipal court, Ojile said.

Contact Stan Finger at 316-268-6437.

Read more here: <http://www.kansas.com/2012/01/26/v-print/2191502/planeview-fracas-ends-with-shooting.html#storylink=cpy>