

NEWS RELEASE



Russel Burger, Sheriff
Lane County Sheriff's Office
125 East 8th Avenue
Eugene, OR 97401
(541) 682-4150 / FAX (541) 682-4522
Email: sheriffs.office@co.lane.or.us

CASE NUMBER: 06-10463

DATE/TIME OF INCIDENT: December 7, 2006 @ 6:19 PM

DATE/TIME OF RELEASE: December 7, 2006 @ 8:37 PM

NATURE OF STORY: Reported armed robbery discovered to be false

LOCATION: 576 W. Oregon Ave, Creswell, OR 97426

INVOLVED: 14 year old male juvenile

DETAILS:

A 14 year old male juvenile had an accidental discharge with his parent's .22 caliber rifle inflicting a non-life threatening injury to his left forearm. The rifle was appropriately locked with a child safety lock, however the juvenile had secretly taken the key off of his mother's key ring earlier in the day. The call was initially reported to be an armed home invasion-style robbery.

On December 7, 2006 at about 6:19 PM the Lane County Sheriff's Office responded with South Lane County Fire and Rescue to a report of a gunshot wound at the listed address. The 14 year old male caller to 911 said that a male suspect had entered the residence, that the two subsequently struggled over a firearm, and that the caller had been shot in his forearm. The caller provided the 911 dispatcher with a suspect description including height and weight, as well as a clothing description including a black ski mask. The caller said that the suspect was running from the residence.

Numerous Sheriff's Deputies responded to the call. All of the Sheriff's staff that are paid for by contract with the City of Creswell to provide police services were on duty to assist with the City's annual downtown tree lighting ceremony. This is a large community gathering which closes Oregon Avenue (the main street through Creswell) in the downtown area. These deputies instead responded to this call for service.

Additional Sheriff's Deputies were at the firearms range near short mountain landfill and cleared from there to respond to this high priority call. The Springfield Police Department sent two K-9 officers to assist in the search for a suspect, and the Oregon State Police responded to the area to assist as well. These responding units set up a perimeter several blocks square to attempt to contain this fleeing suspect while the K-9 officers attempted to track him.

Deputies on scene quickly began to question the events as relayed by the injured juvenile. The firearm involved belonged to the residents of the house. It had been in the juvenile's parents' bedroom, appropriately locked with a 'child-safety' style cable and padlock. The lock was located on the parents' bed, along with the key nearby.

One of the Sheriff's Deputies assigned to the Creswell Contract responded to the hospital with the juvenile's parent in order to confront him about the story. The juvenile eventually admitted that he had secretly taken the key to the firearm off of his mother's key ring earlier in the day. He got the firearm out of the closet, took off the lock, loaded a magazine, and planned on firing the weapon into a tree in the back-yard. In the front room of the house he slipped and fell which caused the firearm to accidentally discharge. He made up the story because he knew he wasn't supposed to be handling the firearm and did not want to get into trouble.

Sheriff's deputies will complete a report on the investigation to be routed to the Lane County Department of Youth Services for their evaluation and action. If the caller had been an adult he could be charged with the crime of Initiating a False Report, a Class C Misdemeanor.

For additional information contact: Sergeant Clint Riley @ 682-3698
Prepared by: Sergeant Cliff Harrold