



Menifee Police Department MEDIA RELEASE

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Pursuant to Cal Govt. Code Sect. 6254(f)
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DOMESTIC VIOLENCE SUSPECT ARRESTED AFTER FIVE HOUR STANDOFF WITH POLICE

July 23, 2020 – At approximately 11:30 AM, our communications center received a call for service involving the report of a possible domestic violence incident. The reporting party was a passerby who observed a female on the side of the road who said she had been assaulted by a known suspect. Officers arrived on scene and contacted the victim. She had injuries consistent with being assaulted. She identified the suspect as 55-year-old Gary Byrd out of Menifee (See attached booking photo). The victim stated the assault occurred inside of a residence in the 29000 block of Citation Avenue.

Officers responded to the residence in an attempt to contact Byrd. Byrd refused to come out of the residence to speak with officers. The investigation revealed Byrd had access to weapons in the home and had a previous arrest for a weapon violation. Officers continued to try to establish contact with Byrd; however, all attempts were unsuccessful.

Due to all factors involved, the decision was made to request the Southwest Cities SWAT team to help bring a safe resolution to the incident. The Southwest Cities SWAT team is comprised of the Murrieta Police Department, the Hemet Police Department, and the Menifee Police Department.

The SWAT team arrived on scene at approximately 3:00 PM. The SWAT team set up around the house and attempted to establish communications with Byrd. Crisis Negotiators were able to communicate with Byrd on several occasions, but all attempts to get him to surrender were unsuccessful.

At approximately 6:00 PM, the decision was made to deploy tear gas inside of the residence. Byrd immediately exited the home and surrendered to awaiting SWAT team members without incident.

Menifee Police Department detectives searched the residence pursuant to a search warrant and interviewed Byrd. Based on the investigation, Byrd was arrested for felony domestic violence [273.5 PC] and felony rape [261(a)(2) PC]. Byrd was booked into custody at county jail.

As a result of the incident, Menifee Road between Alicante Drive and Watson Road was closed for approximately four hours.

This was a very dangerous and rapidly evolving incident that had the potential to end with a deadly confrontation with the suspect. I would like to personally thank all the officers and professional staff from our agency, and the Murrieta and Hemet Police Departments. Their professionalism and exceptional training led to a safe resolution for all involved. I would also like to thank the citizen who took the time to stop, check on the victim, and call the police. We value the relationship we have with our community and know our success depends on each other.” – Pat Walsh, Chief of Police



Gary Byrd

MR# 20-004