



KOOTENAI COUNTY SHERIFF

SHERIFF ROCKY WATSON
UNDERSHERIFF TRAVIS CHANEY

KNOWLEDGE • CARING • SERVICE • DEDICATION

KOOTENAI COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE MEDIA UPDATE JANUARY 3, 2012

Even though the investigation is on-going, more information is available regarding the incident that ended with Daniel Zehm, 52, of Dalton Gardens, Idaho, taking his own life late on December 31st.

About 10:15 p.m. Sheriff's deputies were alerted to the information that Daniel Zehm had called a relative and reported that he had his wife and a gun and were in the area of Fernan Lake and were headed towards Kellogg. Deputies subsequently learned that Daniel had contacted his wife, Sondra, at their Dalton Gardens home and initially sprayed her with pepper spray, then taken her into the house to rinse the spray off of her face. Daniel had a gun with him and forced Sondra into her vehicle. The two of them reportedly drove for approximately two hours, driving as far as Harrison, Idaho and back. Daniel was reportedly trying to get Sondra to drop the charges from the November 20th incident where he had poured gasoline on Sondra and threatened to light her on fire.

About 11:00 p.m., Daniel saw the deputies who were trying to stop him on Fernan Road near the Fernan Saddle, and fled down the hill. At one point, when he had to slow considerably for a sharp corner on the icy road, Sondra was able to get out of the car. She was not injured.

Daniel continued heading back towards Coeur d'Alene at speeds up to 90 miles per hour. Deputies slowed considerably behind Daniel due to the road conditions. As Daniel came into Fernan Village, he ran over a spike strip that had been deployed by the Idaho State Police. This caused both of the front tires on the van to go flat. He continued west bound, crossing under the I-90 overpass and coming to a stop in the middle of Sherman Avenue at the East bound I-90 on ramp. Deputies were eventually able to access the vehicle and find that Daniel had shot himself in the head. Emergency Medical personnel arrived a few minutes later and confirmed that Daniel was deceased.

Once the investigation is complete, any further information will be released.

Rocky Watson, Sheriff

By: Major Ben Wolfinger