



Humboldt County Sheriff's Office

826 Fourth Street, Eureka, CA 95501

Date: June 22, 2009

From: Brenda Godsey, PIO
(707) 268-3645

Subject: Attempted Murder Arrest

Case: 200904086

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

At about 3:00 a.m. Sunday, a sheriff's deputy was sent to the 200 block of Gold Dredge Road after receiving a report of a subject with a firearm shooting at a residence. The suspect, Lee Warren Piola, 61 of Orleans, called Sheriff's Dispatchers and told them he was armed with a fully loaded handgun and threatened to kill anyone who came near him. As the deputy was en route he was notified that Piola had shot his neighbor. Sheriff's Dispatchers and the responding deputy did not know Piola's current location as the deputy arrived alone. Knowing at least one victim was bleeding and in need of medical attention, the deputy carefully approached the suspect's residence but didn't find Piola. As the deputy turned his car to approach the victim's house he saw Piola with a flashlight in one hand and a handgun in his other. Piola began running toward the deputy with his gun (Piola's) pointed at the deputy. The deputy identified himself and ordered Piola to drop the gun but he refused and continued to advance on the deputy. The deputy yelled several more times for Piola to drop his gun, which he was still pointing at the deputy. The deputy, who had drawn his own duty weapon, yelled one last time for Piola to drop his gun. Piola, who was about 20 yards from the deputy, finally dropped his gun and the deputy detained him. Piola's weapon was a loaded semi-automatic handgun; Piola had additional loaded magazines in his shirt pockets.

The deputy continued to the victim's residence and found him inside with his wife. The victim had been shot several times in the upper legs. The deputy retrieved a loaded handgun that was on the victim's lap. The victim was transported via helicopter to a hospital where he is in stable condition.

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The preliminary investigation indicated that Piola went to his neighbor's residence with a handgun and fired shots at the residence. The victim armed himself with his handgun and went outside. Evidence at the scene indicated that, in total, at least 17 rounds were exchanged between the two men. The motive for the confrontation is still under investigation.

Piola was arrested and transported to the Humboldt County Correctional Facility where he was booked for attempted murder and shooting at an inhabited dwelling. His bail has been set at \$500,000 and he is expected to be arraigned by Wednesday. Anyone with information regarding this case is encouraged to call Detective Wayne Hanson at (707) 268-3639.

GARY PHILP
Sheriff

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