

KENEDY COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

TX 1310000

INCIDENT REPORT

02/11/2006

NUMBER: 06020136

REPORT DATE: 02/15/2006

ORI: TX1310000

LOCATION: ARMSTRONG RANCH

ZONE: ARMSTRONG

At approximately 1830 hrs on Saturday February 11, 2006, Kenedy County Sheriff Ramon Salinas contacted me, Chief Deputy Gilberto San Miguel Jr. The phone call was in reference to a hunting accident that occurred on the Armstrong Ranch. I was told by Sheriff Salinas to report to the main house on the Armstrong Ranch on Sunday February 12, at 0800 hrs and I would receive more information when I got there.

On Sunday, February 12, 2006, at approximately 0805 hrs, I Chief Deputy Gilberto San Miguel Jr., arrived at the bump gate to the Armstrong Ranch. This ranch is located approximately twenty-one miles south of Sarita, Texas in Kenedy County. There at the bump gate, Secret Service, and Border Patrol personnel met me. I identified myself and told everyone I was to report to the main house. I was instructed to park my vehicle so it could be inspected before I could proceed to the main house. While my vehicle was getting inspected, a Secret Service agent approached me and he advised me he would be riding with me to the main house. As I was approaching the main house, I was instructed to park my vehicle by the cattle guard. There I walked across the cattle guard and was turned over to another agent who identified himself to me as Michael A. Lee, Special Agent in charge with the Secret Service.

As we entered the main house, Mr. Lee introduced me to Vice President Cheney. Mr. Cheney shook my hand and told me he was there to cooperate in any way with the interview. As I got comfortable at a table inside the main house, I asked Mr. Cheney if he could explain to me what had happened the day of the incident.

Mr. Cheney told me that on Saturday, February 11, 2006 at approximately 5:30 pm on the Armstrong Ranch there was a three vehicle hunting party that consisted of himself, Bo Hubert, Pam Willeford, Jerry Medellin, Katharine Armstrong, Sarita Armstrong Hixon, Harry Whittington, and Oscar Medellin. Mr. Cheney told me the sun was setting to the west when the dogs had located a covey. Around the same time, Oscar Medellin notified the hunters he had also located a covey. After the group shot at the first covey he and Pam Willeford proceeded to the second covey because Harry Whittington was looking for his downed birds. Mr. Cheney told me he and Pam Willeford had walked approximately 100 yards from the first location and met up with Oscar Medellin and the hunting guide Bo Hubert. There was a single bird that flew behind him and he followed the bird by line of sight in a counter clockwise direction not realizing Harry Whittington had walked up from behind and had positioned himself approximately 30 yards to the west of him. Mr. Cheney told me the reason Harry Whittington sustained the injuries to his face and upper body was that Mr. Whittington was standing on ground that was lower than the one he was standing on. Mr. Cheney told me if Mr. Whittington was on the same ground level the injuries might have been lower on Mr. Whittington's body.

STATUS: CLOSED

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OFFICER: SAN MIGUEL, GILBERTO JR. 502

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The weapon Mr. Cheney was using at the time of the incident was an over under twenty-eight gauge shotgun. It had a brand name of Perazzi Brescia and was made in Italy. The serial number on the weapon read 115288.

At that time, I told Mr. Cheney I didn't need any more information at this time, but how could I reach him. Mr. Cheney told me I could contact Mr. Lee. I then excused myself and proceeded out of the main house.

While outside around the headquarters I was able to locate and get information from Gerardo Medellin [REDACTED], who helped me identify the other people in the hunting party, Michael Andrew Hubert [REDACTED], Pamela Pitzer Willeford [REDACTED], and Katharine Armstrong [REDACTED]. I was able to speak briefly with Katharine Armstrong who told me pretty much the same story Mr. Cheney told me. (See her written statement for further details.)

On Monday February 13, 2006, at approximately 1000 hrs I Chief Deputy Gilberto San Miguel Jr. and Lt. Juan J. Guzman went to Spohn Memorial Hospital located in Corpus Christi, Texas to speak with Harry Whittington. We were escorted to Mr. Whittington's room and there I introduced Lt. Guzman and myself to Mr. Whittington who was sitting in a chair. I told Mr. Whittington we needed to speak with him on the incident that occurred Saturday February 11, 2006. I asked Mr. Whittington if we could record our conversation and Mr. Whittington requested not to be recorded due to his voice being raspy. It was then I requested a written affidavit be done and Mr. Whittington gladly agreed to do one as soon as he returned back home to his office.

Mr. Whittington did speak of the incident and explained foremost there was no alcohol during the hunt and everyone was wearing the proper hunting attire of blaze orange. The hunting group was out to shoot a covey that the dogs had found, about the same time, a second covey was found by the outrider. The first covey was flushed and he got a double. While looking for the downed birds, he had returned back at one point to the hunting vehicles where Katharine and Sarita were to let them go for the second covey. However, Katharine had told him to go and shoot the second covey. So, at that time, he proceeded to join the hunters who had already moved from the first location. At that time, a nurse came in the room and asked Lt. Guzman and I to kind of hurry up so Mr. Whittington could rest. Mr. Whittington again reiterated that this incident was just an accident. He was concerned this incident would bring a bad imagine to hunting in Texas. I then told Mr. Whittington I would give him a call in a few days to get the written affidavit.

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On Tuesday February 14, 2006 I spoke with Gerardo Medellin who dictated to me as I wrote his affidavit. (See Affidavit for further details.) I was also taken to the area where the incident occurred. The pasture name is the Comal Pasture and it is located at approximately four miles west of U.S. Highway 77. The GPS readings for this incident was retrieved from my phone as N 26* 56.352' W 97* 50.420" while on location, I was able to understand more how Mr. Cheney and Katharine Armstrong described the area in their statement.

On Wednesday February 15, 2006 I was able to make contact with Katharine Armstrong, Sarita Armstrong Hixon, Pamela Willeford, and Michael Hubert. I requested a written affidavit from each one of them. I was able to get everyone's affidavit except for Mr. Hubert's affidavit. He told he would be in the area sometime Friday February 17, 2006 and would get in contact with me.

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02/15/2006 16:00 P.M.