

WINTER HAVEN POLICE

125 N. Lake Silver Dr., NW • Winter Haven, FL 33881 • Phone: 863-291-5858 • www.winterhavenpd.com

Date: March 17, 2015
Time: 10 A.M.
Contact: Jamie Brown – Public Information Officer
Office - (863) 295-5905 Cell – (863) 559-0449

WINTER HAVEN – The quick response of both Winter Haven Police and the Polk County Sheriff's Office has resulted in the capture of a burglary suspect just minutes after burglarizing two residents of an estimated \$20,000 worth of items that included jewelry, cash and a handgun.

On 3-16-15 at approximately 9:30 p.m., Polk County Sheriff's deputies responded to a possible overdose at a residence in the Cypress Gardens RV Park (County jurisdiction). The mother of 22 year-old William Joseph Yerke called deputies to report the incident of a possible overdose, but Yerke had fled prior to the deputies' arrival.

Within approximately an hour, a 9-1-1 call was received by a resident on Bent Grass Dr. regarding a burglary that had just occurred. (Bent Grass Dr. is within the city limits of Winter Haven and just a short distance from Yerke's residence.) The homeowner at 7341 Bent Grass Dr. reported hearing rustling of window blinds in a bedroom of the home. Upon inspection, the homeowner found the sliding glass door ajar and saw a male matching the description of Yerke standing on a back screened-in porch.

Approximately 15 minutes later, another 9-1-1 call was received from the homeowner at 7333 Bent Grass Dr. The homeowner had returned home to find the home burglarized. The homeowner saw a door leading from the rear patio was open and an interior door from the garage was also open.

Police continued searching the area for the burglary suspect while deputies went back to the original location where Yerke's mother had called. Yerke was located at the residence and turned over to Winter Haven Police. Yerke had all of the stolen jewelry and money in his possession. The stolen weapon, which Yerke dropped while inside of the 7341 Bent Grass Dr. residence, was recovered and returned to the owner at 7333 Bent Grass Dr.

Yerke was placed under arrest and is charged with two counts of Grand Theft (F3), two counts of Armed Burglary (F1), and one count of Grand Theft – Firearm (F3).