



MEDIA RELEASE

On February 21, 2020, the Amador County Sheriff's Office responded to a deceased individual located in an open park and ride area on State Highway 124, immediately adjacent to State Highway 16. Highway 16 is a busy state highway and is utilized as a main travel route between Amador County and Sacramento. The Sheriff's Office identified the decedent as Philip Bruce Haney, who was living in his motorhome less than three miles from where his body was located.

Investigators from the Amador County Sheriff's Office responded and assisted the patrol personnel who were already on scene. Investigators discovered Mr. Haney's vehicle parked next to his body, a folding chair he appeared to collapse from, a suicide note on the dashboard of the vehicle, and a loaded .40 caliber Sig Sauer handgun with one spent shell casing near the gun. Investigators discovered what appeared to be a gunshot wound to the upper chest area of Mr. Haney. Investigators collected the evidence at the scene and responded to Mr. Haney's motorhome in the 49er RV Park in Plymouth, CA. Investigators entered the motorhome and discovered it was clean and well-organized. Investigators found personal and financial paperwork arranged neatly on the kitchen countertop, some containing instructions for how Mr. Haney wanted his assets dispersed. While on scene, Investigators spoke with Mr. Haney's neighbor who told them Mr. Haney appeared depressed lately and gave him his potted plants the day before, which was the last time he saw him. Mr. Haney's motorhome and vehicle were towed to our evidence storage area and we requested the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Crime Scene Unit process both and gather evidence. The FBI responded on February 27, 2020, and assisted in this process, gathering numerous pieces of evidence to be processed by their laboratories.

On February 26, 2020, a forensic autopsy was completed by the Sacramento County Coroner's Office. The cause of death was determined to be a "Perforating gunshot wound of torso." The forensic autopsy did not reveal any other suspicious trauma or antemortem injuries which would suggest Mr. Haney was involved in any type of altercation.

On April 3, 2020, numerous thumb drives and a laptop that were recovered from the motorhome were given to the FBI for forensic analysis.

On July 22, 2020, the Sheriff's Office received the results of the unregistered firearm trace report from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives related to the handgun that was found on scene. Our investigators were able to contact the last registered owner of the firearm in Georgia. The registered owner informed investigators he was a friend of Mr. Haney's and had sold the firearm to him approximately five years prior.

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700 COURT STREET • JACKSON, CA 95642 • (209) 223-6500 • FAX (209) 223-1609

ADMINISTRATION (209) 223-6515 • EMERGENCY SERVICES (209) 223-6384 • CIVIL (209) 223-6544
CORONER (209) 223-6754 • JAIL (209) 223-6522

On August 6, 2020, we collected DNA samples from the investigators and staff involved with collecting evidence in this case. These samples were sent to the FBI for cross reference and elimination purposes. The FBI lab in Quantico, VA, processed all of the forensic and DNA evidence.

On September 30, 2021, our office received the final report/explanation of all DNA results produced by the FBI lab. The FBI then started a secondary digital examination of the thumb drives and laptop that were collected. A forensic handwriting analysis was performed by the FBI and the suicide note was found to have been signed by Mr. Haney.

On January 3, 2022, we received the final review report from the FBI on the documents contained on the thumb drives and laptop. The FBI indicated many documents found are the property of the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP). On January 24, 2022, the Sheriff's Office received a request from the CBP's Office of Professional Responsibility requesting to take possession of "Contraband" documents belonging to CBP on three thumb drives and a personal laptop.

On January 25, 2022, all of the evidence collected and processed by the FBI was returned to our office, reviewed, and entered into our report.

On February 8, 2022, the thumb drives and laptop containing the contraband documents were turned over to CBP for their investigation into violations of CBP policy and numerous United States Codes.

After a thorough review of the evidence collected and processed by the Sheriff's Office and FBI, the Sheriff's Office has determined the manner of Mr. Haney's death to be suicide.

The Sheriff would like to thank the FBI for their assistance in Mr. Haney's death investigation. Mr. Haney's next-of-kin has been notified of our determination and we extend our condolences to his family and friends for their loss.

Based upon the final determination into the manner and cause of death in this investigation, this case has been classified as closed.