



Brown County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Report for Incident 19BC5423

Nature: Attempt-Locate
Location: L08

Address:



Offense Codes: ATL

Received By: Sarah Jesz

How Received: T

Agency: BCSO

Responding Officers: Tony Sorensen, Ben Smith, Scott Meints, Gavin Wright, Dave W Lunzman, Mark Milbrandt, CANCEL, Terry Evans, Jon Lemke, Wes Graff, Brandon Black, Brian Koens, Dan Bray, Linn Kamin, R Hochstetter, Chris Gross, Linda Marcuson

Responsible Officer: Linda Marcuson

Disposition: CLR 10/17/19

When Reported: 12:00:09 10/10/19

Occurred Between: 12:00:09 10/10/19 and 12:00:09 10/10/19

Assigned To:

Detail:

Date Assigned: **/**/**

Status:

Status Date: **/**/**

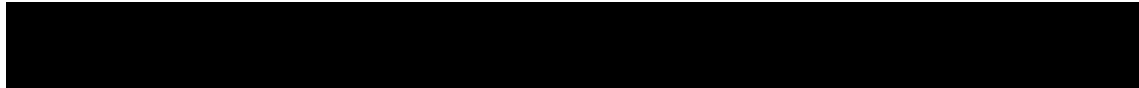
Due Date: **/**/**

Complainant: 19459

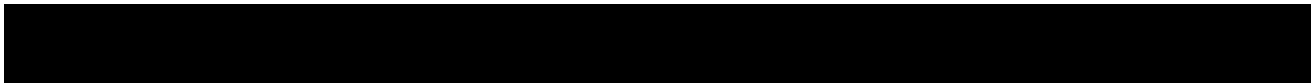
Last: Seliski

First: Matthew

Mid: Gerald



Alert Codes:



Offense Codes

Reported: ATL Attempt to Locate

Observed: AIRP Aircraft Problem

Additional Offense: ATL Attempt to Locate

Circumstances

LT10 Field or Woods

Responding Officers:

Tony Sorensen
Ben Smith
Scott Meints
Gavin Wright
Dave W Lunzman
Mark Milbrandt
CANCEL

Unit :

3A8
3A12
EM1
3A10
3A2
3A1
CANCEL

Terry Evans	3A14
Jon Lemke	3A4
Wes Graff	3A11
Brandon Black	3A9
Brian Koens	3A15
Dan Bray	3A19
Linn Kamin	3A13
R Hochstetter	3A5
Chris Gross	221
Linda Marcuson	3A17

Responsible Officer: Linda Marcuson**Received By:** Sarah Jesz**How Received:** T Telephone**When Reported:** 12:00:09 10/10/19**Judicial Status:** CMP**Misc Entry:****Agency:** BCSO**Last Radio Log:** 12:33:30 10/23/19 8**Clearance:** NR Cleared by Resp Off/No Report**Disposition:** CLR **Date:** 10/17/19**Occurred between:** 12:00:09 10/10/19**and:** 12:00:09 10/10/19**Modus Operandi:****Description :****Method :****Involvements**

Date	Type	Description	Relationship
10/23/19	Name	Seliski, Matthew Gerald	Complainant
10/23/19	Name	Mitzel, Garrett Edward	Complainant
10/19/19	Name	Gederos, Jon David	Mentioned in Report
10/19/19	Name	Schumacher, Victor	Mentioned in Report
10/19/19	Name	Salt, Susan	Mentioned in Report
10/10/19	Name	Berkowitz, Justin Michael	Mentioned in Report
10/10/19	Name	Caven, Mark Allen	Mentioned in Report
10/10/19	Name	Seliski, Gerald Wayne	Suspect
10/10/19	Name	Wolter, Randall Russell	Mentioned in Report
10/10/19	Vehicle	BLU WHI 1979 CESS 172 SD	Aircraft
10/10/19	Cad Call	12:00:09 10/10/19 Attempt-Locate	Initiating Call

Narrative

Brown County Sheriff's Office
Incident Report

Date: 10-10-2019

Reporting Officer: Deputy Sorensen

Offense: Missing Person/ATL

On 10-10-2019 at approximately 1207 hours I was contacted by Chief Deputy Dave Lunzman. Chief Deputy Lunzman requested I meet with a male in the lobby of the Sheriff's Office reference a report of a missing person. I arrived in the lobby a short time later.

Upon arrival I met with a male identified as Matthew Seliski [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] I escorted Matthew into a conference room. I conducted an interview with Matthew. Matthew advised that he needed to report his father, Gerald Seliski [REDACTED] as a missing person. Matthew stated that the last contact he had with Gerald was on 10-09-2019 at approximately 2200 hours. Matthew and Gerald had spent the day together and had traveled to Aberdeen in Gerald's pickup. The two went and ate at the Millstone Restaurant. After leaving the Millstone the two went to Saunders Field where Gerald had an aircraft stored. Matthew parked the vehicle next to a maintenance building. Gerald exited the vehicle and told Matthew to come back in approximately 30 minutes to pick him back up as he only needed to grab some papers out of the aircraft. Gerald left his cell phone inside the vehicle. Matthew left the airfield. Matthew came back to the airfield a short time later. Matthew was unable to locate Gerald anywhere at the airfield. Matthew left the airport and began looking in the area as Gerald did not have any form of transportation and would have to have left on foot. Matthew could not think of anyone in the Aberdeen area that Gerald could contact or a residence he could walk to. Matthew traveled to Oakes, ND. Oakes is where Gerald has a hangar for his aircraft. Matthew searched the airfield in Oakes. He did not locate Gerald or the aircraft in Oakes. Matthew then went to Gerald's residence at [REDACTED]. Matthew arrived at the residence at approximately 0330 hours on 10-10-2019. Matthew remained at the residence until approximately 0745 hours. Gerald never arrived back at the residence. I obtained a last known clothing description for Gerald. Matthew advised that Gerald did not have any major medical problems or any sort of dementia. I contacted both hospitals in Aberdeen to see if Gerald had been admitted. He was not at either hospital. Dispatch was unable to locate any recent contacts with any law enforcement for the evening prior. I advised Matthew if he made contact with Gerald to contact me immediately. I ended my contact with Matthew.

I advised Deputy Ben Smith of the information I had received. Deputy Smith and I responded to Saunders Field to see if we could locate Gerald or his aircraft. We arrived at approximately 1253 hours. Upon arrival we met with employee Mark Caven. We advised Mark that we were attempting to locate Gerald and his aircraft. Mark was familiar with Gerald and advised that when he arrived at the airfield in the morning he noticed that Gerald's aircraft was no longer on the property. Mark stated that Gerald had the gate code to get onto the tarmac as any owner of an aircraft has full access. Mark advised that Gerald's aircraft had been officially grounded as it did not pass inspections. Mark also advised that Gerald did not have a valid pilot's license to operate the aircraft. We advised Mark of the information we obtained from Matthew. Mark believed that Gerald had flown the aircraft off the property as the gates to remove any aircraft were still padlocked shut. Mark directed us to the mechanic that performed the inspection on Gerald's aircraft, Justin Berkowitz. Justin provided us with documents from the inspection of the aircraft. The documents provided

all information pertaining to the aircraft. All documents obtained were attached to this report. Justin advised that the aircraft was a 1979 Cessna 172. IT was not equipped with a radio or a transponder but did have a beacon. The beacon would only be traceable if it was activated. Justin had already contacted the airport manager from Oakes, ND. A search of the Oakes airport was conducted and Gerald's aircraft was not located anywhere on the property. Deputy Smith and I cleared Saunder's Field and went back to the Sheriff's Office.

Deputy Smith and I conducted a meeting with Sheriff Milbrandt, Emergency Manager Scott Meints, and Chief Deputy Lunzman. EM Meints began contacting multiple agencies to notify them of the possible downed aircraft. After obtaining more information from Justin and Mark at the airfield, I contacted Matthew again to conduct another interview. Matthew arrived back at the Sheriff's Office at approximately 1504 hours. I advised Matthew of the information provided by the airport employees. I told Matthew that his story he advised of earlier did not make sense as to why he would just leave Gerald at the airport. Matthew became defensive and asked if he was in trouble and needed an attorney present. We advised Matthew that he was not in trouble, we just needed accurate information. Matthew then admitted that it was Gerald's plan to take the aircraft from Aberdeen to Oakes the night prior. Gerald advised Matthew that if he gets the aircraft off the ground to just pick him up at the airport in Oakes. Matthew observed Gerald at the aircraft on the tarmac. Gerald had a flashlight and was looking inside the aircraft. Matthew had an upset stomach and left the airfield to run to a gas station. Matthew used the restroom and returned to the airfield approximately 15 minutes later. When Matthew arrived back at the airfield, Gerald was gone and the aircraft was no longer on the tarmac. Matthew stated he did not know if Gerald had taken the aircraft to get fuel or if he had taken off to go to Oakes. Matthew stated that at no time did he see Gerald operating or flying the aircraft. Matthew left the airfield and began traveling to Oakes as he originally stated. Matthew was never able to locate Gerald or the aircraft in Oakes. Matthew did wait at Gerald's residence until the morning. I asked Matthew of why he didn't just advise me of the truth in our earlier contact. Matthew stated he was extremely tired and not in his right mind with worrying about his father. I advised Matthew of what was being done as far searching for father. I advised him to contact the Sheriff's Office if he obtained any further information. I ended my second contact with Matthew.

EM Meints had contacted the Civil Air Patrol to notify them of the incident and a possible downed aircraft. A search from the air may be conducted a later time but was not possible at the current time with the bad weather conditions. Information was put out over social media and the radio about the missing aircraft. A missing person entry was put into NCIC for Gerald and the aircraft. A copy of the NCIC entry is attached to this report.

Once the information was given out over social media the Sheriff's Office obtained a report from Randy Wolter. Randy advised that he lived 7 miles East and 2 miles North of Frederick. Randy stated that his wife heard a small aircraft near the residence at approximately 2230 hours on 10-09-2019. She did not observe anything just heard the aircraft and thought it was unusual as the weather was poor. A short time later I was contacted EM Meints. He had obtained multiple reports from people that live in the Hecla/Frederick area of an aircraft flying through at approximately 2230 hours. None of the reports indicated the aircraft going down or any issues.

See EM Meints incident report for further details.

My contacts were recorded on my Wolfcom body camera. The recordings were downloaded and logged as evidence.

Supplement

on 10-14-19 at approximately 0920, I , Deputy Koens made contact with Victor Schumacher as he wanted to report that he heard a lowed low flying small plane flying strait north of his home in the Prairiewood housing area. Schumacher stated that he remembers that it was the same date as the missing plane and that it was around 2200 hours. Schumacher wanted to make sure that the area north of prairiewood had been searched. I advised him that our office, the Civil Air Patrol, and the US Airforce have all been searching north of Aberdeen. Deputy Brian Koens.

Supplement

On 10-19-19 at approximately 0900 Susan Salt [REDACTED] called to advise that on the date of the lost plane, she heard a small plane fly over her home and continue westbound. Salt stated that she was sorry that she did not call in sooner but that she hopes that the plane is found. I advised her that the search was underway and thanked her for her call.
Deputy Brian Koens.

Supplement

On 10-19-19 at approximately 1154 John Gederos called and advised that on what he believes may be the night of the lost plane, he heard a loud thud and that sounded similar to a car-vs-deer accident. Gederos stated that he hears many car-vs-deer accidents along the highway. Gederos stated that he did not find a dead deer the next morning and believes that the thud he heard may have been the sound of the wrecked plane that everyone was looking for. Gederos stated that after hearing the news about the lost plane, he had looked around the area where he could with an ATV but did not locate anything. I advised him that several units were searching and thanked him for his call.

Supplement

Brown County Sheriff's Office
Incident Report

Date: 10/10/2019
Reporting Officer: Jonathan Lemke
Offense: Aircraft Crash (Fatal)

On 10/10/2019 Deputy Sorensen took this report of a missing male who had taken off from the Aberdeen Regional Airport enroute to Oakes ND Airport in a single engine Cessna aircraft. This male, Gerald Seliski, did not arrive at his destination.

Investigator Wes Graff and I were asked to meet with the reporting party, Gerald's son Matthew Seliski, on 10/13/2019 to get a statement from him as he had provided multiple different accounts of the night Gerald left.

We were able to make contact with Gerald at [REDACTED] We met with him in my work vehicle. Investigator Graff conducted the interview of Matthew. Once this interview was completed we met with the incident commander of the search to brief them of the information we had learned. The incident commander at that time was from the Civil Air Patrol, who were in the area conducting aerial searches for the missing plane. We informed them Matthew had told us he had seen a plane leaving the Aberdeen airport headed north around 2200-2230 hours on 10/09/2019. He said he began driving north on County Road 14 in an attempt to follow Gerald to Oakes to give him a ride home.

He said he was able to see the strobe light from the aircraft about three miles north of Aberdeen and approximately 2 miles to the west of County Road 14 (391st Ave). He said he then lost the strobe light in the clouds.

Matt said he and Gerald had gone to the Milstone to eat that night and during their meal Gerald was acting "strange". He said he would say he was going to take his plane to Oakes and then the next sentence he would say how he should just wait out the weather before flying. He said this was not like his dad to be this back and forth with his thoughts.

Over the course of the next week I made contact with Matthew multiple times to follow up with him. During this time I had received a tip that Matthew and Gerald may have exchanged debit cards. I asked Matthew about this. He said the magnetic strip on Gerald's cards did not work so Gerald had asked to borrow his card to purchase fuel for the airplane. I asked Matthew if there has been any activity on his bank account since Gerald had gone missing. He said there had not and he was checking it approximately 3 times a day to make sure. Matthew provided me a copy of his bank statement from the month prior and it showed the card had not been used since before Gerald had gone missing.

I asked Matthew about the possibility of getting a copy of Gerald's financial statements to ensure his accounts were not being used. He said he believed he was the power of attorney for Gerald and would inquire about getting this information.

On 10/18/2019 I made contact with Gerald's other children, a daughter Jessica Hentges from Texas and a son Adam Seliski from Canada as well as his ex-wife Deborah Seliski from Minnesota. I explained to all three I was contacting them to see if they could provide any information that could help us find Gerald.

During my conversation with Adam he told me the last time he had spoken to Gerald was the Tuesday prior to him going missing (10/08/2019). I asked him what this conversation was about. He said they talked about how there was a weather front coming in and about the wet summer we had had. Adam told me Gerald has a good friend in Anchorage Alaska named Ken and another friend named Rollin Goldberry who lives somewhere down south. He said after Gerald went missing he sent out an email to a large number of Gerald's friends and family asking if anyone had spoken with him. He told me Rollin sent him a message back about a conversation they had the week prior to this incident. He said Rollin told him it was a weird conversation for Gerald and he made reference to needing to check himself in to a doctor. Adam said he felt this conversation may have been referring to Gerald have suicidal thoughts.

Adam told me he had heard Gerald might have a Garmin GPS system in his plane but was unsure if Gerald would use it.

I then spoke with Gerald's daughter, Jessica Hentges. Jessica said she hadn't spoken with Gerald in a couple of months. She said the last conversation she had with Gerald was about her children. She said he was complaining about the long wet summer we had and they talked about Matthew's upcoming wedding. She had no other information for me. I told Jessica I was looking at trying to get Gerald's financial documents and had learned she may be listed as his first power of attorney. She said she would contact the bank and try to get this paperwork to me.

I then spoke with Gerald's ex-wife, Deborah Seliski. Deborah told me she and Gerald divorced in 2011 and she rarely had any contact with Gerald. She said they would occasionally exchange emails back and forth and when they would it would be in regards to their children. She told me Gerald had sent her [REDACTED] in August because she had broken both of the arms and was on the verge of being evicted from her apartment.

Adam had provided me with an email address for Rollin Goldberry. I sent Rollin an email message explaining who I am and what I was wanting to speak with him about. Rollin responded but before I could make contact with him via phone the plane was located.

On 10/21/2019 Brown County Dispatch received a call from Ed Mitzel. Ed told dispatch he was at [REDACTED] and his son had located a plane in a field across the road from this address. Deputies Sorensen, Black, Kamin and myself responded to this area. We were unable to locate anyone at this address. Dispatch learned it was 38879 126th St. Deputy Sorensen and I arrived at the same time. He began speaking with Ed and his son, Garrett who had found the plane. I learned Garrett had been going to the north end of the alfalfa field to check a game camera he had set up when he located the plane along the edge of Moccasin Creek.

I observed the wreckage along the east bank of the creek. There was a debris field on the west side of the creek extending in a northwest to southeast direction. It appeared to begin at a tree on the northwest end of the alfalfa field. It appears from the debris and location of the plane it was traveling in a southeast direction when it struck a tree and then crashed into the ground. It then skid across the ground coming to rest against the creek bank.

I could see there was a body of what appeared to be a male still seated in the plane on the left side of the cockpit. The wings had been folded together and the tail section was perpendicular to the fuselage. The male appeared to have

the same clothing on as what had been given to us in the initial missing person description of Gerald. The male was leaning to his left side with his head facing north. His was facing east in the seat and appeared to still have a seatbelt around his waist. His head was under the water and not visible.

I could see the plane was blue and white and I was able to see a partial tail number from the plane. This was all consistent with Gerald's plane. I photographed at this time but as the light was fading it was determined I would return in the morning for more thorough photographs. The scene was secured by Deputies with the Brown County Sheriff's Office throughout the night.

I returned to the scene on 10/22/2019 around 0900 hours. Deputies Evans, Sorensen and I walked the debris field marking more locations of debris with orange or pink flags. Once we had the debris marked as best we could the flags were numbered and individually photographed. A log was taken about what each number flag was depicting. I then took overall photos of the debris field and the plane in its final resting position.

Brown County Coroner Mike Carlsen arrived on scene at the same time as members of the Aberdeen Fire Dept. water rescue crew to remove the body from the plane. The AFD personnel were able to extricate the body from the plane and bring it up to the field. I photographed this process to document any changes they had made to the aircraft while performing this action. Once the body was brought up to the alfalfa field a wallet was located in a pants pocket. This was turned over to me. I was able to find a SD driver's license identifying the body as Gerald Seliski.

Brown County Coroner Carlsen took possession of the body and scheduled an autopsy for Gerald. This was scheduled at 0830 on 10/23/2019. The Brown County Sheriff's Office maintained the scene security until it was turned over to the NTSB and FAA at

Reporting Officer

Supplement

On 10-22-19 from approximately 1000 to 1300hrs, I Deputy Brian Koens responded to the southeast quarter of section 7 township, 124 north Range 63 west in Ordway Township (north west of the intersection of 126th St and 389th Ave). I was Dispatched as a Drone Pilot and responded to fly over and video the area of the downed plane and its debris field. Emergency Manager Scott Meints and myself set up the drone and began flight but landed before obtaining video due to high winds. We decided not to risk drone and equipment damage due to the high winds.

After packing up the drone, I stayed on scene to assist Investigator Lemke, Deputy Evans, and Deputy Sorensen as they were mapping the debris field and taking photos. I did not find any pieces of debris that had not already been flagged.

I also stayed present as Aberdeen Fire and Rescue as well as the Brown County Corner came on Scene to assist in recovering Jerry Seliski's deceased body from the wreckage. I did not take into possession any sort of evidence during this time but was merely present to be available if my assistance was needed.

Deputy Brian Koens

Supplement

On 10-21-2019 dispatch received a report that plane wreckage had been located and that there was a body still inside the aircraft. The wreckage was located across the street from [REDACTED] Deputy Black, Deputy Kamin, Investigator Lemke and I responded to the area. Investigator Lemke and I arrived at approximately 1835 hours.

Upon arrival I observed the wreckage of an aircraft on an embankment of a creek. I observed a body inside what was left of the cockpit. The head of the body was underneath the water. The individual was obviously deceased.

I then conducted an interview with the male that located the aircraft. He was identified as Garrett Mitzel [REDACTED] Garrett stated that on 10-18-2019 at approximately 1830 hours he observed a small white object in the field. Garrett believed the white object to be a piece of rubbish. Garrett stated he did not think anything of it and forgot about it. On 10-21-2019 he was driving by the same field and observed more white objects. He remembered the piece that he observed the week prior. He went to his residence at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] He then walked into the field where he observed all the white objects. That is when he located the aircraft. He observed a body inside the aircraft. He walked back to his residence where he notified his parents and then contacted law enforcement. I ended my contact with Garrett.

While on scene I assisted with a search of the area in an attempt to locate and flag any pieces of the aircraft. I cleared the scene at approximately 1717 hours. Deputy Black remained on scene to provide security of the scene.

Deputy Tony Sorensen
Brown County Sheriff's Office