

Media Release

Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

Scott Mascher – Sheriff

255 E. Gurley Street, Prescott, AZ 86301

Dwight D'Evelyn - Media Coordinator

928-777-7441



September 19, 2016

Armed Homeowner Confronts Burglar

On Saturday, September 17, 2016, around 4:30 AM, YCSO deputies were dispatched to the 5600 block of E. Whisper Ridge, Cornville, regarding a burglary just occurred. This area is also known as the Verde Santa Fe subdivision located off Cornville Road. The homeowner/victim, in his 80's, awoke to the sound of someone in his house rummaging through cabinet drawers. The victim grabbed his handgun, confronted a male suspect and ordered him to lie on the floor. When the victim had to leave the room briefly to access a phone, the suspect was able to escape through the front door. The suspect has not been caught. None of the victim's property was taken.

Suspect description: The man appeared Hispanic or was a darker skinned white male, in his 20's to 30's, average to tall height, and stocky 'but not fat.' The suspect spoke English clearly with no accent as he begged the homeowner not to shoot him. The victim could not provide further details due to darkness.

Background – Labels and signs indicating the victim's home was alarmed were displayed around the property. Also, the victim normally leaves a front window open overnight with the front door locked. The back door is left open but has an exterior security screen which the victim locks. During an inspection of the back security screen, deputies saw that the suspect had pushed screen material near the deadbolt inwards to access the interior side of the lock. Since this was a double keyed style deadbolt (requiring a key to lock/unlock from the interior), the suspect could not unlock the door. **

It was determined that the point of entry was an unlocked and open front window where the suspect removed a screen. Deputies believe once the screen was removed, the suspect waited in darkness alongside the house to see if anyone heard him or if the alarm would activate. Neither occurred and the suspect entered the home.

While searching the neighborhood for this suspect, deputies noticed several homes with open windows and front doors with security screens. Average security screen doors do not afford the same protection as securely installed solid core doors with a quality deadbolt and unlocked windows provide the opportunity for prowlers to access the home. Remember, any noise a suspect makes to overcome good security measures may provide the homeowner/neighbors a chance to detect the activity and contact law enforcement. It is easy to get complacent in these low crime neighborhoods, but simply securing your home properly may prevent a similar incident. These 'layers' of security, including exterior lighting, are important to deter criminal activity.

Anyone with information about this suspect, is urged to call the Sheriff's Office – refer to case 16-033574.

***** During a residential structure fire, it is critical the home's occupants are able to escape quickly. If you have double keyed deadbolts installed, there should be a key placed within arm's reach near the floor so the door can be unlocked from inside.***

Citizens can contact the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office with information or questions at 928-771-3260

or the YCSO website: www.ycsoaz.gov