Officer shot in spree

STANDOFF: Gunman holds police at bay for 2 1/2 hours

By Amy Andrews

Winston-Salem police officers take cover behind patrol cars during a standoff with a gunman at an apartment on Brownboro Road.

CRACK! Shots disrupt lives of residents

Winston-Salem police officers take cover behind patrol cars during a standoff with a gunman at an apartment on Brownboro Road.
SHOOTING

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Warrants said that police seized a high-powered rifle and a .38-caliber revolver. He was in the Forsyth County Jail with bond set at $1 million.

Amos, 24, was in the intensive care unit at Baptist Hospital last night. Doctors operated on him for several hours as they worked to control bleeding caused by the bullet, which entered his lower right chest near his rib cage and exited his lower left back. He may undergo surgery today to repair the damage caused by the bullet.

POLICE CHIEF George Sweat and other officers gave this account of the shooting.

Several officers went to the Hill Top Ridge Apartments about 9:10 after two people reported that someone was shooting.

Amos and Senior Officer John Pratt had been on their way to a training session but heard the call and went to help. As they drove by the apartment on Brookside Road, the gunman shot at their car.

They stepped from their car about 30 feet from Page, who was standing outside the apartment. Pratt ran to woods nearby to seek cover, and Amos was hit before he could get behind the police car.

While Pratt returned fire, Capt. W. Cliff Cranford tried to remove Amos. Cranford pulled a muscle in his back, and three other officers — B.G. Estes, M.G. Cowell and T.R. Smith — removed Amos from where he had fallen beside his car and drove him in a patrol car to an ambulance that was waiting several blocks away.

Amos was conscious on the way to the ambulance, Cranford said. "We were just talking to him, trying to keep him talking to us, trying to keep his spirits up," he said.

Amos usually wears a bulletproof vest but apparently didn't yesterday because he was headed to the training session. Sweat said Amos is assigned to a two-person unit and works mostly in the Kimberly Park area.

An officer moved, officers from the special-enforcement team took over an officer building across Brookside Road from the apartment where the gunman was shooting.

Uniformed officers blocked both ends of Brookside Road — at University Parkway and North Urry Street — and limiting right traffic at its intersection with North Point Boulevard to keep traffic out of the area because the gunman was reportedly to be using a high-powered rifle with a telescope.

Sweat said that the gunman was using at least two guns — a rifle and at least one pistol. Officers were still searching Page's apartment late yesterday afternoon.

Authorities said they did not know how many times the gunman fired. Officers fired between 20 and 40 shots, they said.

OFFICERS FRANTICALLY moved police cars out of the way and evacuating some residents shortly after the shooting began, but the situation had calming down and fewer gunsshots were heard by about 11:30 a.m. Right, J.W. Marble and J.W. Rogers, along with some psychologists who knew Page, helped talk Page into surrendering.

Sweat said he did not know the names of the police who helped the negotiators. Page came out of his apartment unarmed and with his hands above his head, officers said. He was taken to the police department for questioning and then briefly to the Baptist Hospital emergency room after complaining that he wasn't feeling well.

Officers then began searching Page's apartment and the area for further evidence, Sweat said. Several vehicles in the parking lot of the office building at Hill Top Ridge Apartments had been shot, and Amos' cruiser still sat with its front wheels across the curb and the rear wheels in the street.

The two rear passenger windows were shattered, but officers said they couldn't determine whether the bullet that hit Amos went through those windows first.

SWEAT ASKED the community to join the police department in praying for Amos and his family. "We have gone through this in many times in the department," he said.

Two officers were shot in December at the Super Sumer Center after a security guard was killed while trying to stop a shoplifter, the officers were not seriously injured.

Three police officers have been killed in the past 21 years.

Robert Beattage, 24, was shot and killed in January 1991 while planting a pole at a Baptist Church.

Michael Davis was killed in a shooting in January 1994, and Lt. Aaron G. Tinkum was killed in June 1992. Beattage was 18 at the time of his death, while Davis was 29.

Sweat said he didn't think the gunman was aiming just at police officers. "There was no indication that other residents had been fired at," he said.

Page calmly answered questions during a bond hearing last night. He was wearing a white T-shirt and a heavy chain around his neck with a gold Airborne insignia hanging from it. He said he had been in mental hospitals and that doctors had said he suffered from manic depression. He said that doctors have said he was suicidal and homicidal. Page said he has been taking medications for his problems.

Affidavit Foster, who said he lives in the same building and has known Page since November, said that Page was worried about being evicted from his apartment.

Hill Top Ridge Apartments filed a civil suit against Page last month for paying a month's rent. That suit was settled this month, according to court records.

PAGE'S CRIMINAL record shows that he was arrested in 1983, 1984, 1992 and 1994 on assault charges. All of these charges except the one in 1994 were dismissed.

Page was arrested in October 1984 and charged with driving while impaired and possession of marijuana.

That case is pending.

Page, who was born in Forsyth County, spent more than 15 years in the U.S. Army and was honorably discharged in April 1972 with the rank of sergeant first class, according to his military discharge papers.

Foster said Page told him that he was a Vietnam veteran and was wounded in the leg while diving into a foxhole. He had had more than 30 operations and needed another, Foster said.

Page was wearing leg braces yesterday, officers said.

JOURNAL reporters Fred Anderson and Christopher Queen contributed to this report.
Officer dies of gunshot

Accused was to see psychologist Monday, girlfriend says

By Christopher Oline

Police Officer Steven L. Amos II died about 8 last night from a wound he received in a shooting Monday.

Doctors had operated on Amos yesterday afternoon in a second round of surgery after Amos' blood pressure dropped, said Amos' father, Steven L. Amos.

Officer Amos, 24, and his wife, Teresa, had been married about nine months. He was a 1988 graduate of Carver High School and a three-year veteran of the Winston-Salem Police Department.

He and his wife lived on the Amos family farm in Walkertown.

John Vanhuy of Walkertown, a family friend, said, "He wanted to be in law enforcement since he was a teen-ager."

George Franklin Page, 54, the man charged with shooting Amos, is to undergo psychiatric examination at Dorothea Dix Hospital in Raleigh.

Last yesterday afternoon, the district attorney's office requested that Page be sent to

Six for a pretrial mental evaluation. Judge Donald Spivey granted the request.

Vince Rahbi, an assistant district attorney, said that he made the motion because of the nature of the crime and because of Page's long history of psychiatric problems.

"Given all that and the fact that he committed this random shooting, we felt that raises an issue of whether he's capable of proceeding, and we wanted to go ahead and resolve that issue... instead of letting him wait in the jail for weeks," said Rahbi.

Page's girlfriend, Tamara Mitchell, said yesterday that Page was scheduled to go to his psychologist's office Monday morning.

House passes guideline

Deacs steamroll Tar Heels

Univ picks
TROUBLED: Suspect’s ex-wife says he has 2 sides

By Rich McKay

Judy Page said yesterday that her phone hasn’t stopped ringing since George Prisk, a 35-year-old man whom police say is wanted for attempted murder, killed himself. Page’s ex-husband, the man she says was more than 11½ years with, was shot and killed by police Friday night.

Page said she had just returned from work when she heard the loud noise and saw smoke coming from his apartment. She saw police surrounding the building and heard gunshots.

As police searched for the suspect, Page said she realized that her ex-husband was not at home. She then called police and reported the incident.

Page said she had known the man since she was a child, having grown up in the same neighborhood. She said she had tried to help him in the past, but he had refused.

Page said she had been married to the man for 11½ years, but they had divorced two years ago. She said she had been living on her own since then.

Page said she had been working as a nurse at a nearby hospital for the past five years. She said she had been trying to help other people, but had never been able to help her ex-husband.

Page said she had been thinking about going back to school to become a therapist, but had never been able to find the time.

Page said she had been trying to get her ex-husband to see a therapist, but he had refused. She said she had tried to get him to see a psychologist, but he had refused.

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