

MEDIA RELEASE

For immediate release

Monday, July 09, 2007, 1430 hours

Contact Person

Jim Denney, Sheriff-Coroner, (530) 822-7312

Subject

Sutter County jail staff stop escape attempt

Text

Sutter County Sheriff's correctional staff stopped an attempted escape from the jail's Maximum Security Unit on Saturday. Correctional staff discovered that two inmates in the B-Pod section of the Maximum Security Unit had attempted to tunnel through the interior concrete wall of their cell using a handle from a mop bucket and a metal shelf pried loose from the wall of their cell.

The hole was discovered by correctional staff after they searched the cell while investigating suspicious noises coming from it, finding a hole had been dug into the concrete wall that measured approximately 18" high, 6" wide, and approximately 3" deep. The hole was concealed by a bed sheet that was draped over the bunk above the hole. Chunks of concrete and dust were found in a pile and concealed by a towel near the inmates' bunk area. Both inmates occupying the cell were found to have fresh abrasions and cuts on their hands and fingers.

Both inmates were separated and moved to new cells. They were charged with attempted escape, conspiracy, and felony vandalism, with no bail. The damaged cell was closed to further use and is awaiting repairs by the County's Facility Management staff.

The suspect inmates were identified as follows:

1. **Justin Mathias Ziegenmeyer**, age 22, of Linda (Yuba County), who was in custody on charges originating from the Yuba City Police Department for attempted murder, personal discharge of a firearm, assault with a deadly weapon with use of a firearm, being a felon in possession of a firearm, personal use of a firearm and a parole hold. He was being held without bail on these charges.
2. **Stephen Harlin Burton**, age 23, of Yuba City, who was in custody on charges originating from the Yuba City Police Department for failure to appear (3 counts), a seatbelt violation, possession of a

syringe/paraphernalia, and battery with great bodily injury. He was being held for \$50,000 bail.

Sheriff Jim Denney commented on the escape attempt as follows:

“I am pleased with the alert and quick response of the correctional staff and I commend them for their thorough actions in stopping this escape attempt.”

The 32-cell Maximum Security Unit was built during the years 1998-99 after the County was successful in obtaining federal funding for its construction, and it was opened in 1999. The damaged wall is approximately 12” thick and is reinforced with rebar inside the concrete and cinder-block wall.

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