



Fresno County Sheriff's Office

John Zanoni, Sheriff

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News Release

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Suspect in Deadly Winton Park Shooting Captured in Missouri

On Thursday, law enforcement in Camden County, Missouri arrested 40 year old Michael Brandon Kent of Fresno. He was taken into custody without incident. The extradition process is now underway to have Kent transported to Fresno County to face a murder charge.

Earlier this week, homicide detectives with the Fresno County Sheriff's Office asked for the public's help in locating 40 year old Michael Brandon Kent of Fresno, who also goes by the nickname of Gage. Detectives had already secured an arrest warrant for Kent committing a homicide.

During the week, our office received information of Kent possibly being in Missouri. Our detectives coordinated with U.S. Marshals Service Fugitive Task Force to try and locate Kent. On Thursday, they found him in the city of Camdenton, MO.

Around 10:30 pm on Wednesday, July 19th, 2023, a utility worker called law enforcement after finding an injured person, later identified as James Buford, near Piedra and Elwood Roads, which is in the area of Winton Park. EMS, Cal Fire and deputies arrived and found the man, along Piedra Road, outside of the park. EMS transported him to Community Regional Medical Center in Fresno where he later died.

69 year old James Buford of Sanger Buford was contracted by Fresno County to work as a camp host. This means he was a custodian caretaker hired to provide on-site security for Winton Park. The county has a total of 13 such workers who provide this type of service at seven different county parks.

The Fresno County Sheriff's Homicide Unit worked relentlessly since the night of the shooting to identify the suspect responsible. Their great police work has now paid off by taking a dangerous person off the streets and beginning the process of delivering justice to the Buford family.

Anyone with additional information in this case is asked to please contact Detective Rudy Tafoya at (559) 600-8207, rudolpho.tafoya@fresnosheriff.org or Crime Stoppers at (559) 498-7867, www.valleycrimestoppers.org You will remain anonymous and may be eligible for a cash reward. Reference case # 23-8313.