



BREMERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Bremerton Police Arrest Man for Murder in Death of a 67 Year Old Woman

At 10:30 AM this morning, Bremerton Police Officers and Detectives arrested 57 year old Richard R. Heller at his home in West Bremerton. The arrest followed a lengthy investigation into a death that occurred earlier this year.

At 8:47 AM on January 5, 2017, Bremerton officers were called to the address on a report from Heller that his longtime girlfriend, 67 year old Perleen Bode, was unconscious and possibly had passed away. It was confirmed that Bode had died, and officers conducted an investigation of the circumstances and the scene, which is standard procedure for this type of incident. The Kitsap County Coroner also responded, and began a standard investigation as well.

An autopsy determined that Bode's death was due to having suffered a broken neck with severe spinal cord injuries. The investigation indicates that Bode was strangled on the night of January 4th, and her larynx was crushed. Verbal and written statements obtained from Heller show he was the only person present at the time of her death.

"This was reported as a natural death, but the results of this case show why it is important that we never assume anything," said Bremerton Police Chief Steve Strachan. He added, "We appreciate the excellent work of our Coroner's Office and the diligence of our officers and detectives."

Heller was jailed following the issuance of an Arrest Warrant signed by Judge Hull, with bail set at \$1,000,000. The case is forwarded to the Kitsap County Prosecutor's Office with a Certificate of Probable Cause for Domestic Violence Murder in the Second Degree, a felony.

The warrant and probable cause documents are attached. Also attached is a photo of Heller being taken into custody by BPD Officer Sara Felty

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