

BREMERTON POLICE DEPARTMENT

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 13, 2017

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Bremerton Police Department
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Bremerton Police Arrest Man for Murder in the Death of an 87 Year Old Neighbor

At 3:00 PM April 12th, Bremerton Police Officers and Detectives stopped and arrested 45 year old Craig W. Miller in his vehicle in West Bremerton. The arrest followed a lengthy and exhaustive investigation that began over fifteen months ago following a murder that occurred November 7, 2016 at an address in East Bremerton. Miller is a registered sex offender related to a previous felony conviction in the state of Illinois.

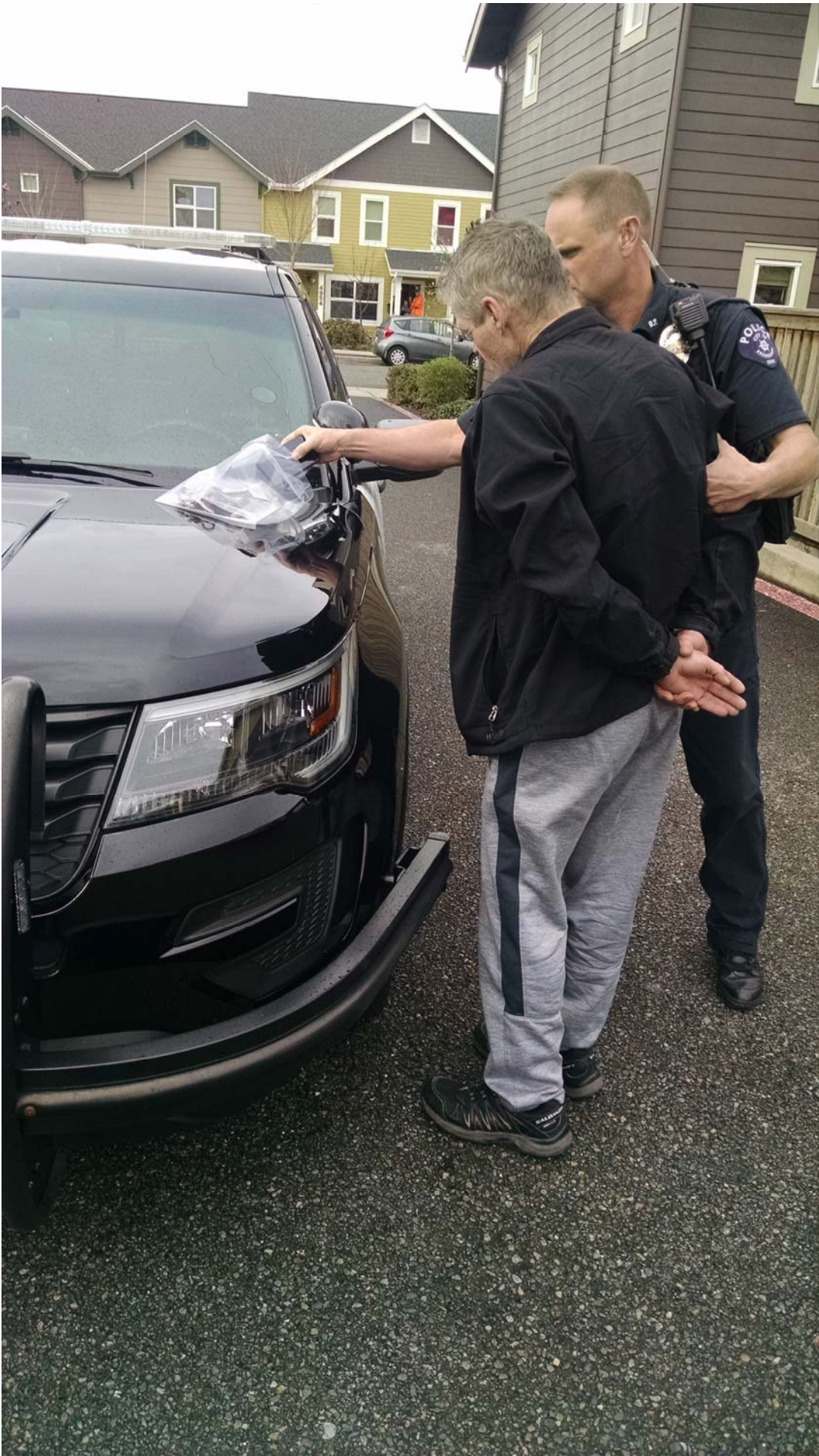
At 4:48 PM on November 7, 2015, Bremerton officers were called to an East Bremerton apartment by Miller who was calling to report that his “buddy”, 87 year-old Floyd Zumwalt, had been apparently killed by an unknown assailant. Miller was interviewed that evening at the scene and several times since the murder. Significant physical evidence pointed to Miller as the assailant early in the investigation. Continued work by detectives, including dozens of interviews as well as forensic testing, led to testimony and evidence showing Miller was the perpetrator.

“Our detectives and officers have been diligently working on this complex case for months, and hopefully this arrest can begin to bring some closure and justice for the family and friends of this 87-year old man,” said Bremerton Police Chief Steve Strachan. He added, “We appreciate the excellent work of our Coroner’s Office and the assistance of our Kitsap County Prosecutor’s Office.”

Miller was jailed at the Kitsap County Jail and bail was set at \$1,000,000. The case is forwarded to the Kitsap County Prosecutor’s Office with a Certificate of Probable Cause for felony Murder in the First Degree.

The probable cause documents are attached.

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CERTIFICATE OF PROBABLE CAUSE

Clerk Code

Case # B15-008807

SUSPECT NAME: Craig W. Miller (03/15/1972)

COURT: District

ARREST CRIME: 9A.32.030 Murder-1

ARREST DATE & TIME: 04/12/2017 1507 hours

ARREST LOCATION: 4800 block of Bay Vista, Bremerton WA

Statement of Probable Cause

On November 07, 2015 at 4:48 pm Craig Miller called 911 to report that he found his 87 year-old neighbor Floyd Zumwalt "off the bed" and "drunk" bleeding and lying on the floor. Miller was calling from Zumwalt's apartment at 114 Lebo Blvd #1, Bremerton, Kitsap County, Wa. Miller commented to the 911 operator that he can hear Zumwalt breathing and he sees Zumwalt's chest moving up and down. The 911 operator asked Miller to offer aid and perform CPR for Zumwalt but Miller refuses although he tells the operator he is a retired fire chief and an EMS (Emergency Medical Services) instructor. Although Miller reports Zumwalt is alive and breathing during the call, he leaves Zumwalt's side at least three times during the call because he is so nervous and is "pacing like crazy." Near the end of the call Miller steps out on the porch to smoke a cigarette while waiting for aid to arrive instead of consoling or comforting Zumwalt. Miller even glibly jokes with the 911 operator when she asks if he thinks Zumwalt was struck with the bat, he answers, "Well, I'm no expert in forensics, but that's what I'd say!".

When Bremerton Police Officers arrive on scene Zumwalt is lying in a pool of blood and has an obvious head wound. Zumwalt is so clearly deceased that when BFD aid arrives they confirm death, but offer no aid. Miller gives an initial statement at the scene, is photographed and then released. Within hours, detectives re-contact Miller and collect his clothing. Detectives later find (when compared with the photos of Miller taken at the scene) Miller has provided a different pair of pants to investigators. When he is questioned about it, Miller admits to having changed his pants after the homicide, offering that he changed them because they had become loose (stretched out) in the waist and uncomfortable, but he can offer no explanation for what happened to those pants or why he provided investigators with a different pair.

When Miller is questioned by investigators during a recorded interview he denies touching Zumwalt after finding him on the floor. Miller demonstrates that he never got closer than arms-length to Zumwalt's body and said that he never offered aid or checked his pulse. Miller is adamant that he took nothing from Zumwalt or Zumwalt's apartment, but when asked if his fingerprints will be found on the murder weapon, Miller answers, "God, I hope not!" During a later examination of Miller's shoes from the night of homicide, the WSP Crime Laboratory found Zumwalt's blood on the upper half of one shoe. Miller can offer no explanation for the presence of this blood. The DNA from the blood has been matched by the lab to Zumwalt's DNA showing the odds that it belonged to someone besides Zumwalt as 1 in 220 quintillion.

During the investigation it was discovered that after being released from the scene on the night of the homicide, Miller has a short encounter with neighbor Jeff Corona. Corona later tells investigator's that Miller told him Zumwalt is dead and was beaten and STABBED. Miller also visits with his friend Calvin Burnell that same night and tells Burnell that he discovered Zumwalt's body and Zumwalt was beaten and STABBED. Both of these conversations take place separately and prior to Miller's recorded interview at the Bremerton Police Department that begins at 2338 hours on November 07, 2015. This is significant because detectives are still processing the crime scene at this time and the coroner doesn't move Zumwalt's body until about midnight that night and it's at that time that a broken knife blade is discovered underneath Zumwalt's body. This discovery leads investigators on scene to a more thorough examination of Zumwalt's body and the realization that Zumwalt was actually STABBED as well as beaten. The stab wound is obscured by Zumwalt's clothing and cannot be seen without a manipulation of the clothing and/or the body, yet Miller knows that Zumwalt was both beaten and STABBED.

Finally, no other persons were seen with Zumwalt on the day of his death except Miller. Miller tells police that he enters Zumwalt's apartment, removes a pot from the oven and then finds Zumwalt in situ on the floor next to his bed and immediately calls 911; within 5 minutes of arriving at Zumwalt's apartment. Brittany Wilson, a witness in an apartment sharing a common wall with Zumwalt's bedroom (where his body was discovered), told police that she observed Miller arrive at Zumwalt's apartment alone. She says that about 15 minutes later she heard a loud thump from Zumwalt's apartment like something heavy hitting the floor or wall. Wilson's boyfriend, Joseph Cisneros, is also in the apartment with Wilson and describes the noise as sounding "like some things getting knocked over." Cisneros confirms that he saw only Miller at Zumwalt's apartment and after hearing the noises he (Cisneros) exited his apartment and looked towards Zumwalt's apartment and noticed the blinds in Zumwalt's bedroom swaying, as

if from a disturbance. Wilson notes that she saw police and aid arrive at Zumwalt's apartment within a half an hour after the noises.

Following an autopsy, Zumwalt's death was determined by the Kitsap County Coroner's Office to have been caused by blunt head trauma and a stab wound to the abdomen. The manner of death was classified as homicide.

Craig Miller is the only person seen with Floyd Zumwalt on the day he is murdered. Miller is seen entering Zumwalt's apartment by multiple witnesses moments before sounds of a struggle are heard coming from Zumwalt's bedroom. Miller is a trained EMS instructor and refused to provide aid to Zumwalt. Miller has intimate knowledge of the crime known only to the killer and is found to have Zumwalt's blood on his clothing. Miller disposes of his pants after the murder with no justification or explanation. For these reasons I believe there is Probable Cause to believe Craig Miller intended to and did in fact cause the intentional death of Floyd Zumwalt in the state of Washington on November 07, 2015.

I certify (or declare) under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of Washington that the foregoing is true and correct.

Signature:

Print Name: Det. Martin Garland ID# 430.

Date:

Bremerton Police Department