

Mendocino County Sheriff's Office Press Release

(Title of Crime/Incident) Coroner's Investigation

Report Number: 2015-11675
Coroner Number:
Crime/Incident: Coroner's Investigation
Location: 7000 Block of Simmerly Ranch Road, Laytonville CA
When: Date: 05-14-2015 **Time:** 7:18 PM

Victim Info :

	Name	Age	Street Address	City, State
Victim #1:	Gerald Vitelli	22 years		Fullerton, CA

Suspect Info:

	Name	Age	Street Address	City, State
Suspect #1:				

Written by: Lieutenant Shannon Barney

Synopsis: On 5-14-2015 around 7:00 PM Mendocino County Sheriff's Deputies, Ambulance Personnel from Laytonville Fire, along with Cal Fire were dispatched to the intersection of Iron Peak Road and Spy Rock Road in Laytonville related to a possible deceased person at the location. Fire and Ambulance personnel arrived first where they found two individuals in a vehicle. One person was found unresponsive in the rear of the vehicle and pronounced deceased at 7:18 PM. This person was later identified as Gerald Vitelli, 22 years of age, out of Fullerton California.

Deputies who responded to the scene described the second individual as somewhat evasive when inquiries were made into the circumstances related to Vitelli's death. Deputies then summoned the Mendocino County Sheriff's Detectives Unit to the scene to conduct further investigation.

Detectives could not determine the cause of death, saw no obvious signs of foul play and eventually found the second person may have been concerned about his and Vitelli's involvement in a marijuana growing operation. The witness then agreed to take deputies to the scene where Vitelli was reported to have died. The location was a remote area in the 7000 Block of Simmerly Ranch Road, Laytonville CA.

There Detectives found a small marijuana growing operation consisting of one small greenhouse, a travel trailer, and a second area used as sleeping quarters for Vitelli and the witness. Detectives located a small generator near the entrance of the sleeping quarters and noted the quarters were not well ventilated. There were no obvious signs of foul play at the scene and the witness was released.

The cause of death is currently under investigation with an autopsy scheduled for 05-15-2015 to include a Blood Alcohol and Toxicology analysis. The marijuana growing operation was not eradicated and no charges related to the garden are anticipated at this time.

Approved By: Lieutenant Shannon Barney

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