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One dead in apparent homicide

Port Orchard, Wash. -- Kitsap County Sheriff's detectives are investigating the early morning death of woman on residential property surrounding Panther Lake, in South Kitsap, immediately north of the Mason County Line.

Sheriff's patrol deputies found the body of a woman, mid-thirties in age, partially clothed, on the ground near the lakefront, in the 4000 block of Panther Lake Road West.

"The victim's wounds are consistent with those sustained through violent means," said Detective Lt. Earl Smith. "We are investigating the woman's death as a homicide."

While detectives believe that they have tentatively identified the victim, confirmation of the woman's name and age will be made by the Kitsap County Coroner. Public release of the woman's identity is being withheld pending notification of family members.

Deputies responded to the property at 2:02 a.m., following a 9-1-1 dispatch of a call received from a hysterical female who reported, "I think someone is dead."

After finding the body of the victim, deputies contacted the caller inside the residence and conducted a safety sweep of the house. No other persons were found. The woman was escorted from the residence and later transported to the sheriff's office in Port Orchard for questioning.

Sheriff's detectives are processing the scene for evidence, both the interior of the residence and the surrounding grounds and property. Interviews with family members, neighbors, acquaintances and others are being conducted to determine the facts concerning the victim's death.

The woman found at the house, age 33, was arrested and booked into the Kitsap County Jail this afternoon on a charge of murder, 2nd degree. Bail was set at \$500,000. She will make an initial appearance in Kitsap County Superior Court at 3:00 p.m. tomorrow.

“The investigation is still in its initial stages,” added Lt. Smith. “Along with numerous other issues involved in this investigation, we’re still examining the relationship between the two women and a motive behind this crime.”

An autopsy is scheduled for tomorrow. The coroner will make a determination as to cause and manner of death of the victim.

Persons who may have information about this investigation are asked to contact Detective Mike Rodrigue at (360) 337-4479. Those wishing to remain anonymous may contact Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound at 1-800-CRIME-13.

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