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REMEMBER HIM FOR THE WAY HE LIVED

Those who love Eric Goff II, of Patrick Springs, young officer with Danville Police Department, want you to remember his life, not ask about his death



Eric Goff II is shown with his girlfriend, Hannah Helbert. He was planning to propose.

PHOTOS SUBMITTED

By Bill Wyatt
bill.wyatt@martinsvillebulletin.com

Eric Goff II had bought an engagement ring for the woman he loved. He had a job that seemed to suit him. He lived in his hometown and talked to his parents pretty much every day. By all accounts, he was as happy as a 22-year-old could be.

So why on Nov. 18 did Goff, a police officer for just less than a year with the Danville Police Department, take a gun and kill himself at his home in Patrick Springs?

Goff was a self-proclaimed "mama's boy," the pride of Eric and Amy Goff of Patrick Springs, the brother of Erica Falls, apparently very much in love with Hannah Helbert ... and he was gone, dead.

Details are scant about why on this day and in this way he decided to take his own life.

We know that he had been planning to propose to Helbert. He recently had bought a set of rings. He had talked about asking her father for her hand in marriage.



SEE GOFF | A10 Eric Goff (left) and his son enjoyed many hours together.

Falling tree kills fire chief and wife

Charlie and Sherri Bradshaw both were beloved in community

By Bill Wyatt
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The Horsepasture Volunteer Fire Department was in full mourning on Saturday after the department's chief, Charlie Bradshaw, and his wife, Sherri died in a stunning accident not far from the firehouse on Friday afternoon.

Firefighters lowered the American flag in front of their station to half mast, and they posted an "end of watch" message on the marquis.

The Bradshaws had just picked up their twin grandsons about 4 p.m. and were traveling east on Bouldin Road in Henry County when a tree inexplicably fell on their sports-utility vehicle.

The SUV left the roadway near 109 Bouldin Road and may have clipped a utility pole before careening into a wooded area and striking a tree. Both were pronounced dead at the scene. Their grandsons survived.

"I'm not sure if they hit the utility pole or not, but the vehicle drove through the tree that struck the vehicle, and there was a utility pole down, and then there was the vehicle in the woods, a few hundred yards away," Henry County Public Safety Director Matt Tatum said. "I couldn't go down there and see that, I just couldn't."

SEE CHIEF | A8



BILL WYATT/MARTINSVILLE BULLETIN

Charlie and Sherri Bradshaw died in this crash.

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WEATHER

Today will have intervals of clouds and sunshine. Tonight will be partly cloudy. For detailed weather information, see Page A2

54 HIGH 33 LOW



See the winners from the Bulletin's cutest pet contest. Page A12



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MHC Christmas Parade 3PM Today

Man sought by deputies is found dead

From staff reports

A man Henry County Sheriff's deputies police had been looking for on charges that he assaulted a woman was found dead in a residence in Henry County on Saturday afternoon.

Deputies found Michael T. Purdue, 43, of 966 Dyers Store Road dead at that address when they entered the house after he failed to respond to their continued ef-

orts to contact him, a sheriff's office release said.

The situation unfolded after the Martinsville/ Henry County 9-1-1 Center received a call at 9:58 a.m. from 3288 Green Hill Dr. in Martinsville.

The resident, Ashley Lynn Justus, 28, told deputies that Purdue, who was her mother's boyfriend, had become irate and began to assault Justus, the release said.

Justus said Purdue pulled out

a firearm, struck her in the head with it and began to choke her, the release said. She said Purdue threatened to commit suicide and fled the home in his vehicle.

He returned but didn't enter the home, she said, and at 10:15 a.m. deputies found Purdue's vehicle at his residence.

They made continuous attempts to contact Purdue, the release said, but he refused to exit the home.

Investigators from the HCSO obtained arrest warrants on Purdue for abduction (felony), strangulation (felony), use of firearm during a felony (felony) and assault and battery (misdemeanor).

After obtaining a search warrant to enter Purdue's residence, at 3 p.m. a tactical unit from the Sheriff's Office made entry and found Purdue deceased from an apparent self-inflicted gunshot

wound, the release said.

His remains will be transported to the Office of the Chief Medical Examiner for the Western District of Virginia for an autopsy to determine cause and manner of his death.

Anyone having information pertaining to this incident is asked to contact the Henry County Sheriff's Office at 276-638-8751 or the Crimestoppers Program at 63-CRIME (632-7463).

Chief

From Page A1

The scene was almost surreal. The road was blocked off for hundreds of feet from the scene of the accident at both ends. A rescue worker was overheard giving directions to other responders:

"I don't want anyone coming in here. No media, no one, unless it's one of us."

The Horsepasture Fire and Rescue answered the call only to arrive at the scene of a horrific automobile crash and find that it had claimed the lives of its leader and his wife.

It was an emotional scene as rescue workers from Horsepasture arrived and then many others from surrounding departments were called in to assist. Hardened rescue workers who have seen it all turned away and walked back from the crash crying and broken down.

The fire department on Saturday issued a statement about its loss:

"We are deeply saddened and regret to inform you that our Chief, Charlie Bradshaw and his beloved wife, Sherri, have passed away this evening. Chief Bradshaw was the current Chief and has been since 2007. Our thoughts and prayers are with their family and our fellow members. We will share the details of the arrangements when we find out."

Witnesses at the scene Friday described the accident and its aftermath, and officials across the county expressed statements of sadness and honor.

Henry County Deputy County Administrator Dale Wagoner released a statement from Henry County Board of Supervisors Chairman Jim Adams:

"The county is saddened to learn that Horsepasture Fire Chief Charles Bradshaw and his wife, Sherri, died as a result of injuries sustained during a motor vehicle crash earlier today. Chief Bradshaw loved our community and served it well. We are grateful for Chief Bradshaw's service, unwavering courage as a first responder and his dedication to protecting citizens. We are also very grateful for the sacrifices made for our community by his wife Sherri. We offer our prayers and condolences. I ask our entire community to pray for Bradshaw's family, friends, employees, and fellow firefighters."

Trooper D.A. Fulcher of the Virginia State Police was the investigating officer on the scene.

"I can confirm there are two fatalities. The bodies are still in the vehicle awaiting extraction at this time," Fulcher said. "Due to the people involved, I'm not going to say anymore at this time. Our PIO [public information officer] is working on a press release."

Sgt. Garletts, the designated PIO for Henry County, was unavailable and had not issued a release as of Saturday afternoon.

"Charles Bradshaw, cap-

tain of the Horsepasture Volunteer Fire Department, civic leader and owner of Triangle Electric and his wife, Sherri, were killed in an automobile accident this evening on Bouldin Road. Our thoughts and prayers go out to the family," Horsepasture District Supervisor Debra Buchanan said.

Charlie Bradshaw received Henry County's highest honor, the Jack Dalton Community Service Award, in 2005, and his mother, Nancy Bradshaw, had received the same award in 2008. His mother passed away in June of this year.



Horsepasture Fire Chief Charlie Bradshaw (second from left, front row) with the 2019 line officers for the department: (from left) Deputy Chief Nickie Hairston, Bradshaw, Asst. Chief William Martin, First Capt. Justin Pope, (back row from left) Asst. Engineer Dustin Hopkins, Second Capt. Matthew Gunter, Safety Kenny Thompson, Engineer Kevin Hendricks, Lt. Ryan Mize, and Equipment Ra'Kim King. Bradshaw was killed in an auto crash on Friday afternoon.

PHOTO SUBMITTED

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