



NEWTON COUNTY
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EZELL BROWN, SHERIFF

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Press Release

08/08/2017

Between 07/12/2017 and 08/03/2017 the Newton County Sheriff's Office investigated six armed robberies of area businesses, including three at Dollar General Store locations. Two men have been arrested for one armed robbery. One of the suspects is also charged with two additional counts of armed robbery, with more charges possible.

In July, the Sheriff's Office formed a Task Force comprised of deputies from the Criminal Investigations Division, Crime Suppression Unit, Traffic Patrol Unit and Special Investigation Unit specifically to investigate, identify and interdict the perpetrators of these violent crimes. Extra patrols were set up, leads were developed and information on similar armed robberies in neighboring Rockdale and Henry counties was shared.

On Thursday, August 3rd, at 9:21 p.m. the Task Force was on duty when two men went in to the Dollar General at 12861 Highway 142 North in Oxford, GA, with the intent of committing an armed robbery. Witnesses reported that two suspects, wearing black jackets and masks, entered the store and one suspect displayed a handgun. Witnesses told the 911 operator that the suspects fled the scene in a silver car with one taillight out, South bound on Highway 142 from Highway 81, heading in the direction of Alcovy Road. A BOLO was issued.

A few minutes later a Covington PD unit spotted a vehicle matching the description and initiated a traffic stop, with NCSO Task Force units converged. Tolek Raphelle Johnson, 19, and a 16 year old Juvenile male, both of Lithonia, were taken into custody.

A search warrant was issued for the vehicle and a gun, masks and clothing was discovered that tied into other armed robberies. Tolek Johnson was additionally charged with the armed robbery of the Dollar General Highway 81 location on July 25th, 2017, as well as the armed robbery of the Dollar General at 5321 Highway 20 on July 24th, 2017.

The investigation is continuing and all NCSO case information will be shared with other agencies.

Sheriff Ezell Brown wants the Citizens of Newton County to rest assured, "As long as there are threats like this affecting the wellbeing and safety of those we serve, we will continue to work diligently to build solid cases against criminals who engage in such senseless violent acts."

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