

Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

Office of Public Information

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Joseph Lombardo, Sheriff

August 16, 2022

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Director Jamie Ios
Sergeant Miguel Garcia
Officer Larry Hadfield
Officer Aden Ocampo Gomez
Officer Misael Parra

Assistant Sheriff Andrew Walsh Discusses August 11, 2022 OIS

On May 20, 2022, officers responded to an armed robbery that occurred in the area of North Los Feliz Street and Stewart Avenue. During the robbery, a white male adult stole a vehicle at gunpoint from a 73-year-old woman. Through the course of the investigation, officers identified the suspect as 40-year-old Justin Venegas.

On August 11, plain-clothes officers were conducting a follow-up investigation at Venegas' last known address in the northeast part of the valley. Officers observed Venegas enter a vehicle and drive out of the area. The LVMPD air unit was requested to assist in following him as he drove away.

At approximately 7:13 p.m., the air unit observed Venegas exit his vehicle and steal a white Chevrolet Avalanche at gunpoint near North Pecos Road and Cheyenne Avenue. Patrol officers in the area conducted a vehicle stop on Venegas, but he failed to stop. Due to the violent nature of the crime, a vehicle pursuit was initiated.

Venegas evaded officers driving recklessly through congested traffic. During the pursuit, Venegas reached speeds of 100 mph and was observed driving on the wrong side of the road. At one point, an unmarked LVMPD vehicle equipped with police lights and siren was behind Venegas when he suddenly came to an abrupt stop, causing a collision. The police vehicle was disabled and the officer was transported to the hospital with minor injuries.

Marked patrol units continued to pursue Venegas and attempted to initiate a Pursuit Immobilization Technique (PIT) near East Craig Road and North 5th Street. As officers moved in, Venegas fired two rounds from the driver window, striking the windshield of the patrol vehicle. Officer Brendan Burbrink, who was in the passenger seat, returned fire from his duty weapon toward Venegas through the windshield, impacting the rear of the stolen vehicle.

As Venegas approached the intersection of Desert Inn Road and Jones Boulevard, he forced a driver to stop and attempted to steal her vehicle at gunpoint. The victim backed away from Venegas who then began shooting at her. The victim sustained minor injuries and was treated

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on scene by medical personnel. Venegas returned to the Avalanche and fled eastbound on Desert Inn.

Shortly after, Venegas drove into a busy grocery store parking lot located in the 4800 block of West Desert Inn. Venegas attempted to steal another vehicle at gunpoint, but was unsuccessful. He retreated into the Avalanche as officers were arriving in the parking lot. Venegas then accelerated toward the officers who had exited their patrol vehicles and were ordering him to stop, prompting officers Brendan Burbrink, Cristian Mojarro, Alondra Montero, Amanda Montalto and Mark Sayas to discharge their duty weapons. The Avalanche was struck multiple times, but Venegas was not injured.

Venegas continued driving northbound on Decatur Boulevard at a high rate of speed. At Decatur and Faircenter, Venegas crossed several lanes of traffic and intentionally struck a K9 vehicle head-on at 67 mph. Venegas' vehicle was disabled and arriving officers took him into custody without further incident.

The K9 officer was transported to UMC where he was treated and released. The patrol dog, K9 Boris, was taken to an animal hospital for an examination and was uninjured.

Venegas was also transported to UMC for his injuries. He has since been released from the hospital and booked into the Clark County Detention Center for the following charges:

- Attempt murder with a deadly weapon on a protected person, 3 counts
- Battery with deadly weapon on a protected person, 1 count
- Attempt murder with a deadly weapon, 1 count
- Attempt robbery, 1 count
- Discharging a firearm into vehicle, 1 count
- Robbery with deadly weapon, 1 count
- Felony evading, 1 count

Venegas was also booked for the following charges related to the May incident:

- Robbery with a deadly weapon, victim over 60, 1 count
- Assault with deadly weapon, victim over 60, 2 counts
- Assault with deadly weapon, 2 counts
- Grand larceny auto, 1 count

A video of the briefing can be viewed by clicking on the following link:

<https://youtu.be/c075Xx138Uc>

This is an ongoing investigation. An examination of this incident is being conducted by the LVMPD Critical Incident Review Team. This review focuses on policy, tactics, and training as it relates to this use of force.

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