

Arrests made in murder of WASH grad

Waynesboro Herald, By Richard F. Belisle
December 26, 2000

Waynesboro, Pa.—Three men have been charged in the June deaths of two young men, including former Waynesboro resident, a sheriff's department spokesman in Stevens County, Wash., said Tuesday.

Implicated in the deaths of Nicholas Dewayne Kaiser, 21, who attended Waynesboro Area Senior High and a man believed to be Josh Schaefer, also 21, of San Diego, Calif., were John D. "Chooey" Grange, 26, Jeffrey S. Cunningham, 25, and Dane M. Williams, 27, according to Deputy Gilbert Geer.

Addresses for the three suspects were not available.

According to police in October, a hunter found the skeletal remains of two men off a remote logging road northeast of Colville, Wash. The vehicle was registered to Kaiser. Police made a positive identification of Kaiser through medical records.

Geer said Tuesday that while Schaefer has not been officially identified as the second victim pending the results of DNA testing, "We're fairly certain it's him."

Geer alleged Kaiser and Schaefer were connected to a drug ring and said the motive for the killings appears to be revenge for being police informants.

"They were both providing the police with information," he said.

Kaiser's Bronco was set ablaze with the bodies of both men inside, police said. Both were badly burned, police said.

Grange, who was arrested in Portland, Ore., on Nov. 14 is believed to have been the trigger man, Geer said. He has been charged with murder.

Cunningham was arrested in Broward County, Fla., on Nov. 3 and Williams in Vancouver, Wash., on Nov. 8. They both have been charged with criminal assistance, Geer said.

Police, through their investigation, learned that on the day of the murders the victims were seen with the suspects at the Northport Barter Faire, a huge, semi-annual festival in Stevens County which draws thousands of patrons.

"We talked to a lot of people who saw them together at the fair," Geer said. He said that Cunningham and Williams gave statements to police.

Kaiser was the son of Wayne J. and Judy Kaiser of Waynesboro. He was in the senior class as WASH and his picture appears in the 1997 senior class yearbook. He also attended the Franklin County Vocational Technical School where he studied carpentry. He earned his GED in 1998, according to an obituary that ran in the Herald-Mail newspapers on Oct. 6.

According to King County, Wash., Superior Court records, Kaiser pleaded guilty in 1998 to possession of an illegal hallucinogenic drug.

On June 10, Kimberly Kerpan, Schaefer's common-law wife, had called several newspapers in western Washington state to report Schaefer missing..

Police believe the murders occurred on June 11.