



POLICE

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH FLORIDA



Christopher L. Daniel, Chief of Police

Media Release

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Death Investigation

UPDATE: Shortly before 7:00 a.m. on Saturday, August 12, the University of South Florida Police Department received a report of a deceased person in parking lot 3C near the Fine Arts Building on the Tampa campus. Upon arriving at the scene, police found Winton C. Cutchins, 61, of Tampa who was deceased and appeared to have suffered upper body trauma. At approximately 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 12, David Tyler Bartles, 21, and Thomas Allen Phanphilathip, 36, both of Tampa, were taken into custody in connection with the death of Cutchins. They are currently being held in the Marion County jail awaiting extradition back to Tampa on charges of first-degree murder and theft of a motor vehicle by force.

Details of the investigation indicate that Bartles and Phanphilathip arrived at Cutchins's house in the early morning hours on Saturday, August 12 seeking a ride to a bus depot. Mr. Cutchins agreed to assist the men, and ultimately drove them to a parking lot on the USF campus around 6:30 a.m. Information suggests this is when and where the two suspects attacked Cutchins with a knife and removed him from the vehicle. The suspects departed the USF campus, taking Cutchins's truck and leaving him in the parking lot.

Believing those responsible were still in possession of Cutchins's older model Chevrolet pickup truck, USF police personnel through various police investigative tactics transmitted alerts to other law enforcement agencies regarding the vehicle of interest. At approximately 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, August 12, officers with the Ocala Police Department were in contact with the suspects, who had been reported as looking suspicious at a local gas station.

By way of the information provided by USFPD, Ocala police officers were alerted that Bartles and Phanphilathip were the ones sought in connection with the death of Cutchins. Ocala police officers took them into custody. Cutchins's vehicle was recovered in Ocala in the possession of the suspects. The USF Police Department has been able to determine that none of the parties involved are affiliated with USF, and based on the targeted intent of this crime, the safety of the USF community was not at risk.

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