

A report of a possible "attempted breaking and entering of an occupied residence" resulted in a brief manhunt in the area of the Lakeview Estates subdivision in the Dana community this morning about 8:a.m. A particularly heavy response consisting of approximately 14 Sheriffs Deputies and Detectives assisted by the NC Highway Patrol and units from the Hendersonville Police Department cordoned off a perimeter and enlisted the help of a tracking K-9. Further investigation and a canvassing of the area failed to determine with any certainty if an actual attempt to break and enter had been made or if the report was a result of a coincidence of unrelated events and circumstances.

The Sheriffs' Office received a call on a non emergency line from Mr. Justin Fisher of 425 Bird Haven Rd, Lakeview Estates, who indicated that he had observed a white male person outside his residence and that it appeared suspicious to him. The person Fisher observed appeared to have an object in his hands that looked like a crow bar or pry tool. Fisher stated that he took security measures and went through his home to ascertain if everything was secure. When he went down into his basement, he noticed that the basement door to the outside was open several inches. At that time he contacted the Sheriffs' Office to report a possible B&E attempt.

Responding officers set up a perimeter and requested the NC State Highway Patrol helicopter to provide aerial surveillance operations. Officers from the Hendersonville Police Department also arrived to help set a perimeter and to look for anyone matching the description of the possible suspect. Mr. Fisher described the person that he saw as a white male between 5'5" and 6'00" in height wearing a dark shirt and blue jeans. His time to observe the individual was very brief and no further description was available.

Officers at the scene were unable to find any evidence of a forced entry and the K-9 failed to pick up a track. Officers in the area also failed to find anyone matching that description although there were utility workers in the neighborhood. Investigators do not doubt the veracity of Mr. Fishers' observations, however it could not be determined that the door had been forced open or even if it had in fact been locked and closed. After an hour or longer of intensive canvassing and patrol, it was decided to stand down the operation pending further evidence or developments.

What we have is a homeowner being observant, taking valid precautionary measures when things looked out of place or suspicious and notifying authorities as soon as was practical under the circumstances. It could be that the person, whom he observed, was up to no good; or it could be just a collection of circumstances that appeared to indicate something other than what was actually occurring. In any event, we would want to respond and have the opportunity to prevent a crime or to capture a suspect as quickly as possible after the commission of a crime. In this case we can't be certain, but we followed through in good order and hope that if anything was amiss that we prevented any subsequent activity. We commend Mr. Fisher his heads up response to the situation that he observed.