

CONTACT:
Tanny M. McGinnis
Community Relations Deputy
Garfield County Sheriff's Office
107 8th Street
Glenwood Springs, CO 81601

December 21, 2009



PRESS RELEASE GARFIELD COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Garfield County, Colorado: At approximately 4:16pm on December 2nd, 2009, Garfield County Sheriff's Office K-9 deputies were asked to respond to mile marker 9 on highway 13, north of Rifle. The deputies responded to assist the Colorado State Patrol with a one-vehicle accident where the driver was attempting to flee the scene. Upon arrival an unidentified witness directed deputies out into the field west of the accident scene. The witness stated that the driver was running away on foot. The deputies observed the suspect running west bound towards a creek bottom. Deputies directed the subject to stop but he continued running. They then notified the male subject that a K-9 was en route and would be used to track his location. The male party reached the creek and deputies lost visual contact. Corporal Chad Whiting arrived on scene with his K-9, Bak. Bak was used as a locating tool as he is trained and certified in tracking. Deputies and a Colorado State Patrol Corporal accompanied Bak and Cpl. Whiting in a track of the subject beginning at his last visual location. Bak took them into the creek bottom and then began heading south staying in the creek bottom, it was apparent Bak was on the suspects track. Approximately five hundred yards down the creek Bak stopped, indicating a possible location. Cpl. Whiting decided to have deputies hold the area while the handler and Bak retrace to confirm his track. During Bak's second track, deputies spotted a white male with dark hair wearing blue jeans and a green sleeveless t-shirt approximately thirty yards away. The male party was given loud verbal direction to remain still and to place his hands above his head. The male was handcuffed and transported to Grand River Medical Center. It was unclear, at the time, if the

subject was under the influence of alcohol; but deputies were concerned that due to the recent low winter temperatures that the fleeing man would not survive the overnight low temperatures. Bak may have saved this man's life. Owens from Fruita, Colorado was taken into custody, by Colorado State Patrol, and charged with a: DUI, Driving a vehicle with excessive alcohol content, Careless driving, Failed to provide proof of insurance, Failure to notify police, unattended vehicle, and driving with out a valid driver's license.