



CHERRY VALLEY POLICE DEPARTMENT
ROY BETHGE, CHIEF OF POLICE
806 E. State Street, Cherry Valley, IL 61016
Non-Emergency: 815-332-3432



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 22, 2022

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

Chief Roy Bethge
815-332-3432
rbethge@cherryvalley.org

NEWS RELEASE

CHERRY VALLEY, IL – June 22, 2022 - After months of investigation, the Winnebago County Sheriff's Office and the Cherry Valley Police Department have arrested a suspect in connection with the shooting death of a man in April.

On April 2 around 7:10p.m., Winnebago County Sheriff Deputies responded to assist Cherry Valley Police Officers on a reported shooting in the parking lot of Macy's, located at 7200 Harrison in Cherry Valley. When officers arrived, they found an unresponsive man near a car suffering from what appeared to be a gunshot wound. Prior to officers arriving on scene, the suspect and suspect vehicle had driven away. Despite an extensive search of the area, neither the car nor the suspect were located. However, based on an initial investigation at the scene, the incident appeared to be a targeted attack.

The Winnebago County Sheriff's Detective Bureau spearheaded the subsequent investigation and through the course of their extensive work, identified Elijah L. Lucena, 25, of Chicago as a suspect in this case. Their investigation was reviewed by the Winnebago County State's Attorney's Office and an arrest warrant was issued for Lucena for First Degree Murder.

Detectives continued to work tirelessly to find Lucena. Information was shared with law enforcement partners in hopes that a lead could be developed and that Lucena could be located.

In the early morning hours of Friday, June 17, a traffic stop was conducted on a car by the Fairburn Police Department in Georgia. During the traffic stop, a male passenger was uncooperative, providing officers with false names. The male passenger was then arrested for Obstructing a Peace Officer and during the booking process, fingerprints revealed that the male passenger was actually Lucena.

Lucena was arrested and is currently in Fulton County Jail and awaiting extradition back to Winnebago County.

The charges are merely allegations and Elijah Lucena is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

"I am proud of the hard work of our dedicated team to help identify a suspect in this case," said Chief Roy Bethge. "This partnership has been one that we are grateful for, and I am hopeful that we can bring some justice and some closure to the victim's family."