

Details released on New Mexico State Police Officer-involved shooting in Luna County

Written by gallupsun
Monday, 12 April 2021 09:29

LUNA COUNTY, N.M. - New Mexico State Police Officer Darian Jarrott initiated a traffic stop on a white Chevrolet pickup on Interstate 10 eastbound, near mile marker 102 east of Deming, N.M. on Feb. 4.

During the traffic stop, Jarrott asked the driver, identified as Omar Felix Cueva, 39, of Deming to exit the vehicle. Cueva exited the driver's side holding an AR-15-style rifle and fired at least one shot at Jarrott as he was walking to the rear of the vehicle. Jarrott ducked and fell onto his back as Cueva ran around the back of the pickup toward Jarrott.

Cueva fired several more rounds at Jarrott who was struck by gunfire and killed. As Cueva ran toward the front of the truck on the passenger's side, he shot Jarrott point-blank in the back of the head. A Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) agent arrived on scene and notified New Mexico State Police dispatch that an officer was down. A broadcast was put out to state and local law enforcement agencies.

New Mexico State Police Officers Lionel Palomares and Sonny Montes located Cueva traveling east on Interstate 10 near mile marker 116. Cueva pulled over and fired at Palomares and Montes. The officers returned fire at Cueva who continued to evade officers, traveling east on Interstate 10.

As Cueva fled eastbound on Interstate 10, law enforcement officers from the Las Cruces Police Department (LCPD), the Dona Ana County Sheriff's Office (DASO), and U.S. Border Patrol (USBP) assisted New Mexico State Police with the pursuit. Near the Picacho exit on Interstate 10 near mile marker 135, NMSP officers successfully utilized tire deflation devices on Cueva's pickup.

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Cueva continued to flee east on Interstate 10. Various law enforcement officers engaged Cueva in gunfire as he fled. DASO Deputy Jerod Huston fired rounds from his department issued rifle near the mile marker 136. DASO Deputy John Signore fired at Cueva near the mile marker 138 eastbound. Near mile marker 139, USBP Agent Oscar Delgado fired one round at Cueva as he passed. LCPD Officer Adrian De La Garza then utilized a Pursuit Intervention Technique (PIT) maneuver near mile marker 140. Prior to the pickup coming to a stop, Cueva exited the pickup armed with a firearm and shot multiple rounds towards the officers and deputies. LCPD Officer Adrian De La Garza and DASO Deputies Diego Herrera and Obed Marte returned fire towards Cueva, who was struck several times by gunfire. De La Garza was struck by gunfire and was airlifted to a trauma hospital in Texas where he was treated and released for non-life-threatening injuries.

Officers rendered aid to Cueva until emergency medical personnel arrived on scene. Cueva sustained fatal injuries and was pronounced deceased on scene by the Office of Medical Investigator.

This investigation is active and being led by the New Mexico State Police Investigations Bureau. The officers have the following years of service: NMSP Officer Palomares-8 years of service, Officer Montes-6 years of service, LCPD Officer De La Garza-17 years of service, DASO Deputy Jared Huston-16 years of service, Deputy John Signore-13 years of service, Deputy Marte-11 years of service, Deputy Diego Herrera-19 years of service, USBP Agent Delgado-11 years of service. The New Mexico State Police officers were placed on standard leave and have since returned to duty.

Contact DASO, LCPD, and USBP for administrative inquiries regarding their deputies and officers.

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“We appreciate the public’s support during this difficult time,” Robert Thornton, Chief of the New Mexico State Police, said. “We will honor Officer Jarrott’s sacrifice by continuing to serve and protect the citizens of New Mexico.”

Jarrott began his career as a Transportation Inspector with NMDPS. He was certified as a law enforcement officer in December 2014 and worked with the former Motor Transportation Division of NMDPS. In July 2015, he was sworn in as a New Mexico State Police officer where he bravely served until the day of the shooting. Jarrott leaves behind 3 small children and was expecting his fourth child this year.

Jarrott was laid to rest on Feb. 12 at Shakespeare Cemetery in Lordsburg during a private burial.

