

Grand jury clears deputy in Log Cabin shooting - Daily News, The (Batavia, NY) - May 11, 2018 - page A1

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A grand jury has ruled that the shooting death of an Albion man by a Genesee County sheriff's deputy at the Log Cabin Restaurant in April was justified.

"The grand jury found the actions were justified and there is no cause for criminal charges in this matter," District Attorney Lawrence Friedman said.

The case was presented to a Genesee County grand jury Wednesday.

The shooting happened April 11 at the Log Cabin in Indian Falls.

Keith Alan Kent, 61, was shot once in the neck and grazed in the back after Deputy Ryan Young fired 15 rounds at him with an AR-15 rifle.

Sheriff William Sheron turned the case over to state police, who "conducted a very thorough investigation," Friedman said.

"They interviewed everyone who was at the Log Cabin that night," Friedman said. "They did a great deal of work on that case and we are very grateful to them."

The investigation revealed what can be described as a night of terror.

Kent was at the bar talking to a woman, who "was not receptive to what he was saying," First Assistant District Attorney Melissa Cianfrini said.

"He was asked to leave and was removed under protest," she said.

Employees and patrons watched Kent as he walked across the parking lot to his pickup truck, then turning and firing two shots in the air from a handgun.

At the same time, Deputy Young was en route to the restaurant for what initially was a report of an unruly patron.

As he was driving more reports came in and told of a situation "that was quickly escalating," including that shots had been fired.

Kent at one point went back into the restaurant and made threats, Cianfrini said, as employees and patrons were huddled in the basement. Some had armed themselves, she said.

Kent fired one more shot, but it was unclear where. When Young and other patrols arrived, Kent

was outside and Young gave him "multiple directives" to drop his weapon.

Instead, Kent aimed the handgun at Young, who fired 15 rounds at Kent.

The other deputies were not in a position to fire as they were unclear where patrons and employees were, Cianfrini said.

Kent was pronounced dead at the scene.

Deputies did have body camera footage of the shooting, but the dark parking lot made it difficult to actually see what happened, Cianfrini said. Shots and the deputy's commands could be heard on the footage.

Kent, who owned Jordan River Logging in Barre, had sent The Daily News a five-page letter detailing events going back nearly 20 years ago involving his logging company and his arrest for bilking a woman out of money. Those charges were eventually dropped but Kent in recent years has repeatedly targeted the Orleans County District Attorney's Office seeking retribution. His latest letter said the situation had driven him "to the brink of complete insanity over this and it will end soon."

Friedman said nothing Kent said at the scene indicated he wanted to commit "suicide by cop."

Kent had been drinking that night but toxicology tests have yet to be completed.

Young has returned to work.

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