

01-12-2013 Henrico Co VA – Andre Booker – LEO Car Accident

Officer Booker --Henrico County Police Department, VA

<http://forums.officer.com/t7028/>

Officer Andre Gerard Booker
Henrico County Police Department, VA
End of Watch: Sunday, January 12, 2003

Biographical Info

Age: 26
Tour of Duty: 2 yr
Badge Number: Not available

Incident Details

Cause of Death: Drowned
Date of Incident: Sunday, January 12, 2003
Weapon Used: Not available
Suspect Info: Not available



Officer Booker drowned after his patrol car sank in a 30-foot pond on Brook Road. He and other officers had responded to a shopping center at about 0200 hours after receiving reports of gunfire. After officers located the suspect Officer Booker returned to his patrol car. The patrol car somehow crashed through a small fence in reverse and plunged into the 34-degree water. The six other officers at the scene jumped into the water and tried to rescue him but were unable to pull him out. Police dive team members were able to remove him about 80 minutes later and he was taken to the MCV Hospital where he passed away.

Officer Booker had been with the agency for two years and is survived by his parents.

Henrico officer was backing up

<http://www.911jobforums.com/showthread.php?t=17642>

Jan 14, 2003 BY MARK BOWES TIMES-DISPATCH STAFF WRITER

A Henrico County police officer who drowned in a retention pond apparently lost control of his car while backing up to seal off an area where shots were fired.

Police said Sunday's freak accident occurred when Andre Gerard Booker, 26, put his car into reverse to back up and block one of two entrances to O'Charley's Restaurant at The Creeks at Virginia Center in the 9900 block of Brook Road.

Booker's 1997 Ford Crown Victoria bumped over a curb, crashed through an iron fence and into an 18-foot deep storm-water retaining pond about 2 a.m.

He was trapped for about 80 minutes inside the submerged car and was pronounced dead at Medical College of Virginia Hospitals.

A preliminary autopsy report released yesterday said Booker died of accidental drowning.

"It's a freak accident that ended in tragedy," said Command Sgt. Tom Shumate.

Police said Booker, a two-year veteran, was one of the first officers to respond to the "shots-fired" call in the parking lot at O'Charley's. When Booker arrived, he drove to the entrance closest to the restaurant, Shumate said.

After apparently realizing the people were trying to leave in another direction, Booker "stopped and put his car in reverse in an attempt to back up to block the other entrance," Shumate said.

That's when Booker, the eighth Henrico officer to die in the line of duty, "apparently lost control," he said.

Another officer said, "Of course it was dark out there. I think he just felt that he was somewhere else other than where he was. I don't think he even realized that that pond was back there at that point.

"Because of the force he had to have hit that fence with, I think he just felt that there was more parking lot behind him," the officer said.

Two officers witnessed Booker crash through the fence, as they detained three people in connection with the shooting incident, Shumate said.

Just one person was arrested, a man police stopped "almost where the accident happened," Shumate said. At 2:10 a.m., one of the officers radioed "that the subjects had been stopped and there had been an accident with a police car in the lake."

Booker's car was still visible at that time, with his driver's-side window at least partially rolled down. Booker, a large man, was seen moving inside as if he were attempting to escape.

Police initially reported the depth of the pool to be 30 feet, but county planning department documents indicate the design depth to be 18 feet. The pool has a 1-foot-deep shelf that extends 10 feet out from around the edge before deepening to 18 feet.

At least six officers jumped in the frigid water to try to save Booker. At one point, eight officers and a supervisor formed a human chain in an attempt to reach the car.

The darkness and water temperatures in the mid-30s hampered rescue efforts.

One officer who dove in "went at least 10 feet down and said he didn't feel anything," said a colleague. "He said that water was so-o-o-o-o cold. He said after two dives, he had to get out. He was getting a tingling [sensation] all over his body."

The officers were taken inside O'Charley's, where employees helped them warm up.

Booker was eventually pulled from the pool by the Henrico Fire Department's search-and-dive team.

The man police arrested in the shooting incident, John Lamont Stancil, 31, of Caroline County, is charged with possession of a firearm while being a felon, reckless handling of a firearm, discharging a firearm in public and being drunk in public.

Booker was born in Forsyth County, N.C., and attended Forsyth High School in Winston-Salem before his family moved to Martinsville in 1991. He graduated from Laurel Park High School in 1995.

He received an associate's degree in administration of justice and public safety from Patrick Henry Community College in 1999. He graduated from the Henrico Division of Police Training Academy in August 2001.

"He was a very well-liked officer," said one of his colleagues. "He was the kind of guy who always had a smile on his face."

"He was very competent," the officer added. "I've only heard good things about his work."

Booker was to be promoted Friday to Officer First Class. He had not yet been assigned his own patrol car and was driving a department car on Sunday.

Funeral arrangements were incomplete. Booker, an only child, is survived by his mother, Audrey Elaine Menefee, and stepfather, David Turner, of Martinsville. Booker also had a Richmond-area girlfriend.