



Office *of the* District Attorney General
Ninth Judicial District

Serving Loudon, Meigs, Morgan and Roane Counties
Russell Johnson, District Attorney General

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT LEADS TO A LENGTHY PRISON
SENTENCE FOR RUFUS RAGLAND WHO INJURED LCSO DEPUTY

LOUDON COUNTY- April 20, 2016

Background on Ragland incident: On August 22, 2014, a black Chevy Tahoe stolen out of Knox County was reported to be in Loudon County on I-75 Southbound when the vehicle was spotted by LCSO Deputy Craig Brewer. Brewer confirmed it to be the stolen vehicle through the use of the stolen Tahoe's OnStar system. The OnStar operator communicated with Loudon County dispatch and remotely flashed the vehicle's lights so Brewer could confirm that it was indeed the stolen vehicle.

Deputy Brewer then pursued the stolen vehicle off the Hwy 72 exit ramp where the OnStar operator intentionally disabled the vehicle, slowing it down. LCSO Deputy JC Schultz and Corporal Marty Branham joined the pursuit as the vehicle continued slowly on Hwy 72 toward Loudon before turning into the Shell gas station and then into the Weigel's parking lot.

LCSO Sergeant Michael Watkins saw the vehicle circling the gas pumps at Weigel's watched a black male (later identified as Rufus Ragland) jump out of the stolen Tahoe and attempt to flee on foot. Navigating around the pumps, so as to be in a position to deploy his K-9 if needed, Watkins began to get out of his patrol car when the suspect jumped into (coincidentally) another Black Tahoe. Ragland then sped towards Sgt. Watkins ramming his patrol car, slammed into the driver's door of the cruiser, before backing up and hitting a support pole. Ragland then accelerated the Tahoe forward again in Watkins direction in the process striking Deputy JC Schultz who was by then out of his car, striking Schultz sending him over the left side fender of the Tahoe in a summersault and onto his head on the concrete. The Ragland vehicle then sped towards and onto Hwy 72 before being eventually stopped by Tennessee Highway Patrol and Ragland was placed under arrest. The 9th District Drug Task Force Agent recovered a .38 caliber revolver, approximately 3 grams of cocaine, digital scales and 162 individual baggies of packaged marijuana from the initial stolen vehicle black Tahoe. The suspect was affirmatively identified as Rufus Lamar Ragland, age 19, of Knox County.

Through combined efforts of the Loudon County Sheriff's Office, the Loudon Police Department, the 9th District Drug Task Force and the 9th District Attorney General's Office and the Tennessee Bureau of Investigation, Mr. Ragland was indicted December 8, 2014 on the following charges:

- 1 count of Attempted Second Degree Murder
- 2 counts of Aggravated Assault
- 1 count of Felony Reckless Endangerment
- 2 counts of Felony Evading
- 2 counts of Theft (\$10k or more but less than \$60K)
- 1 count Possession of Schedule II, Cocaine, with Intent to Sell/Deliver
- 1 count Possession of Schedule VI, Marijuana, with Intent to Sell/Deliver
- 1 count Possession of Paraphernalia
- 1 count Possession of Firearm During Commission of a Dangerous Felony

The US Attorney's Office took a separate but parallel prosecution on the drug charges based on local law enforcement's investigation. As a result the Rufus Ragland was sentenced to 180 months in federal prison. The sentence imposed by the federal court was ordered to run concurrently with any anticipated terms of imprisonment in the Loudon County prosecution on the state indicted charges.

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On April 18, 2016, the District Attorney General's Office drug prosecutor, Kristin Kelley, concluded the state case when Ragland entered guilty pleas on his state charges as follows:

Guilty to:

- Attempted Second Degree Murder
- Aggravated Assault
- Felony Reckless Endangerment
- Felony Evading
- Theft (over \$10,000 but less than \$60,000)

Ragland was sentenced to a total state sentence of 15 years. He will serve the federal time first and then be transferred to state prison on the remainder of the state sentence.

In the events of August 22, 2014, Deputy JC Schultz was seriously injured. He has had a long road of recovery and remains a valuable member of the Loudon County Sheriff's Office.

END OF RELEASE