



# KITSAP COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

614 Division Street MS-37  
Port Orchard, WA 98366  
360.337.5698  
[www.kitsapgov.com/sheriff](http://www.kitsapgov.com/sheriff)

**Sheriff**  
**Gary Simpson**  
**News**

**For immediate release:**  
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**Thursday, Jan. 23, 2020**

Update

## Seabeck family murder investigation

**PORT ORCHARD, Wash.** -- A task force consisting of the Kitsap County Sheriff's Office, together with special agents from the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and other federal, local and state law enforcement partners, continues to investigate the homicidal deaths of four members of our community that occurred on Jan. 27, 2017.

**Background:** Almost three years ago four members of the Careaga family were brutally murdered. Sixteen-year-old Jonathon Higgins, 16-year-old Hunter Schaap, and Jonathon's mother, Christale Careaga, age 37, were shot in their home on Tenino Drive West, near Lake Tahuyeh, in the Seabeck area of Kitsap County. The house was set on fire. Two days later, on Jan. 29, Johnny Careaga, age 43, was found shot and burned in a truck on a rural tree farm.

**Update:**

Sheriff's detectives, in conjunction with FBI special agents, can now state publicly that members and associates of the Bandidos Motorcycle Club were directly involved in the murders of the Careaga family.

Mr. Danie Jay Kelly Jr., now age 41, was previously identified as a **person of interest** in this investigation. He remains a **person of interest**. Danie Kelly Jr. is a known associate of the Bandidos Motorcycle Club.



**Danie Jay Kelly Jr.**

The investigation by the task force continues to fill-in gaps in the timelines concerning the murders. Between the late evening of Friday, Jan. 27, and late in the evening of Saturday, Jan. 28, investigators know that another location was used to hide Johnny Careaga during his kidnapping and murder, before his body was discovered the following day. Investigators are trying to determine the location where the victim and his 2005 Ford F-150 truck were secreted.

Witnesses have come forward and relayed details about seeing several vehicles outside of a tree farm gate on NE Dewatto Holly Road, in the Dewatto area of North Mason County, where Johnny's body and his burned-out truck were later found.



***Tree farm gate on NE Dewatto Holly Road, in the Dewatto area of North Mason County. A burned-out 2005 Ford F-150 pick-up truck with the remains of Johnny Careaga was discovered at this location.***

Investigators are seeking information from anyone who may have seen the truck, or if they noticed suspicious activity on undeveloped property in that area.

Sheriff's detectives and FBI special agents recognize that personal and social relationships change over time. There are those who may not have understood what they were getting involved with when they were asked to participate in this action.

"There are many people that have provided investigators with detailed information; however, there are other witnesses who have yet to be identified," said Lt. Jon VanGesen of the Kitsap County Sheriff's Investigations Division. "To those persons, investigators advise that you are not alone. If you have information about what happened to this family, please contact the task force. Don't pay for the actions of others. Investigators want to work with you. Have your attorney contact us."

The sheriff's office, in conjunction with the FBI, has taken steps to increase public awareness of this investigation in advance of the three-year mark of the murders.

Included in these efforts is a highway (billboard) signage campaign in the Bremerton area (below).



Help! I'm dying...  
My family is dead! ... Come now!  
Hunter's 911 Call 01/27/2017

Help find JUSTICE for this family!

Submit a tip at **www.fbi.gov** or call **1-800-CALLFBI**  
**225-5324**

Please reference the "Careaga Homicides"

The FBI is a significant and important partner. They will exploit every lead, every use of technology to bring this case to a resolution.

The sheriff's office continues to re-interview witnesses, interview new witnesses and re-analyze every piece of physical evidence on this case. This investigation has been Priority 1 since it was reported, and detectives continue to work this case full-time. This is an important investigation to all sheriff's personnel, and it's important to the community.

We will find the answers to so many questions and, most importantly, we will hold those responsible that were involved. Our commitment to this case has not waivered.

Those with any information concerning this investigation are asked to submit a tip at this address:

[www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov) or call 1-800-CALLFBI (225-5354), reference "Careaga Homicides."

Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound is offering a cash reward of \$20,000 for information that leads to the arrest and charging of the suspects responsible for the murder of the Careaga family.

Crime Stoppers of Puget Sound can be contacted at: 1-800-222-TIPS (8477), or on-line at: [www.p3tips.com](http://www.p3tips.com) or by using the P3tips.com app.



# SEEKING INFORMATION

## QUADRUPLE HOMICIDE INVESTIGATION

Seabeck, Washington



### DETAILS

On January 27, 2017, members of the Careaga family were violently murdered in Seabeck, Washington.

The FBI is requesting the public's help in finding justice for this family and is seeking additional information on the individuals who participated in this crime and the subsequent cover up.

If you have not come forward to date, this is your opportunity.

We realize relationships change over time and that some individuals did not know what they were getting asked to participate in. Don't pay the price for someone else's action. We want to work with you. Have your attorney contact us.

Submit a tip at [www.fbi.gov](http://www.fbi.gov) or call 1-800-CALLFBI (225-5324). Please reference the "Careaga Homicides"

**Field Office:** Seattle

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