

Beat: News

Florida moviegoer shot dead during argument over texting

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USPA News - A moviegoer was killed at a Florida movie theater on Monday when a retired police officer pulled out a handgun and opened fire during an argument over texting, sheriff's officials said. The suspected gunman was taken into custody.

The incident happened at approximately 1:30 p.m. local time on Monday when a single gunshot was fired at the Cobb Grove 16 Movie Theatre in Wesley Chapel, a census-designated place in Pasco County near the city of Tampa. It occurred as approximately 25 people were waiting for the war film "Lone Survivor" to begin. Melanie Snow, a spokeswoman for the Pasco County Sheriff's Office, identified the suspect as retired Tampa Police Department officer Curtis Reeves who was going to see "Lone Survivor" with his wife. Sitting in front of him was another couple, identified as Chad Oulson and his wife Nichole. "Detectives say Chad Oulson was using his cell phone during the previews before the film started and Mr. Reeves asked him to stop several times," Snow said. Reeves then left the theater and returned to his seat a short time later, after which Oulson asked him if he had been reported to theater management. "A verbal altercation ensued and Mr. Reeves pulled out a handgun, shooting Chad Oulson in the chest. One shot was fired," the spokeswoman said. Nichole, who had placed her hand over her husband as the argument escalated, received an injury to her hand when Reeves fired the shot. The gunman was detained by an off-duty Sumter County deputy while two off-duty nurses tried to render aid to Chad, but he later died of his injuries after being airlifted to a Tampa-area hospital. Reeves was later booked into the Land O Lakes detention center, where he will face a charge of second degree homicide. Laura McElroy, a spokeswoman for the Tampa Police Department, said Reeves had retired from the department in September 1993 with the rank of Captain. "He was instrumental in establishing the department's first Tactical Response Team," she said. "We are not aware of any contact with the department since his departure more than 20 years ago." Cobb Theatres, which owns the movie theater in Wesley Chapel, said the company's management was "deeply saddened" by Monday's shooting. "This was an isolated altercation between two guests that escalated unexpectedly," the company said in a statement, adding that it was actively working with investigators.

Article online:

<https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-1783/florida-moviegoer-shot-dead-during-argument-over-texting.html>

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