

## Shootout wounds 1 guard at casino

Written by Administrator

Saturday, 13 March 2021 04:44 -

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Pine Bluff police were searching for five people Friday after a shooting the previous night left a security guard injured outside Saracen Casino Resort.

Sgt. Richard Wegner, a spokesman for the Pine Bluff Police Department, said officers believe at least two gunmen shot at security guards, and three guards returned fire.

"One security officer was shot in the abdomen and was taken to a local hospital for treatment," according to a news release that Wegner sent out early Friday. "At this time his injury does not appear to be life threatening."

The security guard's name hadn't been released as of Friday afternoon.

Carlton Saffa, chief market officer for Saracen Casino, told Deltaplex News that "a couple of young punks who were being absolute morons" had taken "potshots" at the casino's security guards.

He said they were "demonstrating a bad attitude" in the casino Thursday night.

"They were told a number of times to stop, and they were respectfully escorted out of the front door," said Saffa. "At that point, they were approaching their vehicle to enter their vehicle. An additional Saracen unit in a pickup truck with lights was just observing as they were getting into their vehicle to make sure that they were in fact leaving. They initially appeared to be leaving, but as they were exiting the property, turning right to leave our parking lot, one individual stepped out of the vehicle, and stood up, leveled his firearm at our officers and began to open fire."

Wegner said police didn't know if any of the assailants were struck during the shootout, which took place about 11:13 p.m. Thursday.

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An exterior wall of the casino and two cars in the parking lot were damaged by gunfire, according to the news release. No patrons were injured.

"It's my understanding that the initial incident involved one of the suspects having a chance meeting with an ex-girlfriend and it rose to the level that security said 'y'all have to go,' and it escalated from there," said Wegner.

Wegner said he doesn't believe the people took guns into the casino.

"This was all out in the parking lot, people outside their vehicles," he said.

After the shooting, the group fled in a dark passenger car, possibly a newer model Nissan Altima, according to the news release.

Casino employees cooperated with the investigation and the security system aided in the quick identification of the suspects, according to the news release. Tirek Langel, 22; Kuro'n Lavell Brown, 21; Brandon Burnett, 27; Joshua Mcafee, 27, and Dontarius Slater, 26, are wanted in the shooting.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Pine Bluff police detectives at (870) 730-2090, according to the release. The department also can be contacted on its Facebook page: [facebook.com/pinebluff.pbpd](https://facebook.com/pinebluff.pbpd).

"Saracen Casino Resort is a place for entertainment and somewhere we want people to feel safe," the casino's management said in a statement. "We go to great lengths to ensure that experience through on site security and various methods of electronic surveillance. The safety and security of our guests and our staff is always our highest priority."

Cameras capture numerous angles of the casino property, both inside and outside, according to the statement.

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"We are in the process of reviewing video with law enforcement as we speak, and will be fully cooperating with the investigation moving forward," it read.

Saffa told Deltaplex News that it wasn't a "gangland-style" shootout in the parking lot.

"This is a couple of young punks who were being absolute morons, and they need to have the book thrown at them for what they did," he said. "But this is not the first time it's happened in Pine Bluff. It's not the first time it's happened in Arkansas. This sort of thing happens at the mall, at Walmart, at big box stores in west Little Rock. It just happened to happen at Saracen last night."

The Arkansas Democrat-Gazette couldn't reach Saffa on Friday.

When called for a comment, Pine Bluff Mayor Shirley Washington referred the newspaper to the Police Department.

**Read more** <https://www.nwaonline.com/news/2021/mar/13/shootout-wounds-1-guard-at-casino/>