

# Stanislaus County **SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT**

Sheriff Adam Christianson  
250 E. Hackett Road, Modesto, CA 95358



## MEDIA RELATIONS



**NEWS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**DATE** June 16, 2008  
**TIME** 4:30 PM

### **OFFICER AND DEPUTY THANKFUL FOR SUPPORT**

**MODESTO, CA** - The flight crew of the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department Air Support Unit who were involved in the tragic incident involving the death of a baby boy over the weekend have received an outpouring of support and both are very thankful.

Stanislaus County Sheriff's Deputy Rob Latapie and Modesto Police Officer Jerry Ramar were patrolling the county on Saturday night in the Sheriff's Department helicopter when citizens called 911 reporting a man in the roadway beating an infant. The helicopter arrived at the intersection of Bradbury Road and Blaker Road west of Turlock before ground units and saw the horrific assault taking place.

Deputy Rob Latapie, who was piloting the aircraft made the decision to conduct an emergency landing in a cow pasture near the roadway. The pasture was not lighted and there was no way for the pilot to be sure the sight was safe for landing. Officer Jerry Ramar, who was assigned to the aircraft as a Tactical Flight Officer for the evening, immediately exited the helicopter and ran to the roadway. Officer Ramar was blocked by an electric and barbed wire fence. Investigators say the officer gave several commands to the suspect to stop. The suspect raised his middle finger to the officer and began to kick the baby who was lying in the roadway. Officer Ramar fired one shot at the suspect which struck him in the forehead. The suspect was pronounced dead at the scene. The baby was transported to Emanuel Medical Center in Turlock where he died a short time later.

The incident has gained national attention in the news media and already there has been an outpouring of support and thanks to the flight crew of the helicopter. Both Latapie and Ramar have felt the support and say it has helped them and their families get through this difficult time. "To everyone who has reached out to us, I want to tell you how much your encouraging words have meant to me," said Officer Jerry Ramar. Deputy Latapie said the decision to land wasn't difficult. "It was the right thing to do," said Latapie. He said, "That baby needed help and I knew we had to do something."

Both Ramar and Latapie said it has been difficult adjusting to the attention this incident has generated. "What that guy was doing is just not normal," said Latapie. "I have never seen anything like that before and I hope I never have to again," said Ramar. Both have spent a lot of time talking with their families about what occurred, trying to make sense of what they saw, and say it will be awhile before they are ready and able to talk publicly about the incident.

Officer Ramar has been in law enforcement for over six years, over four of which have been with the Modesto Police Department. Officer Ramar is assigned to the Modesto Police Department Street Crimes Unit which focuses on gangs. Last year Officer Ramar was awarded the department's Distinguished Service Medal for his service in the Street Crimes Unit. Deputy Latapie has been with the Stanislaus county Sheriff's Department for almost 13 years and is the department's Chief Pilot. He is also a Field Training Officer.

For information about this news release contact Deputy Royjindar Singh at (209) 652-6597 or Sergeant Craig Gundlach at (209) 652-3184.