

In 2013, Mountain N.C.I.S. Team agents were called to 182 Lakeview Heights, Cornelia, Georgia by the Habersham County Sheriff's Office Criminal Investigations Unit in reference to an aggravated assault involving an AK-47 assault rifle and suspected illegal drug activity. The primary suspect in the case was Wanis Thonetheva. Based on information gathered at the scene that day, the Mountain N.C.I.S. Team began to investigate illegal drug activity at the residence and, specifically, Wanis Thonetheva, who resided at the residence.

On or about May 27, 2014, Mountain N.C.I.S. Team agents received information from a confidential informant that Wanis Thonetheva was selling illegal narcotics from the residence. During this time, N.C.I.S. agents established surveillance on the residence and arranged for an undercover purchase of illegal narcotics from Wanis Thonetheva. The undercover drug buy was successful and Wanis Thonetheva sold a quantity of methamphetamine out of his residence. Intelligence gathered at the time was that there were a couple of adult male subjects at the residence standing "guard" outside the door leading to the finished garage area and the front door of the residence and that there were several more adult males and females inside the residence. The informant stated that it was not sure whether these "guards" posted in the front of the residence were armed with weapons or not. According to all information able to be gathered at the time, there were no children or dogs at the residence. The drugs were being sold out of the door leading into the enclosed garage area.

N.C.I.S. Agents obtained a search warrant for the residence. Due to the previous information regarding assault-type weapons at the residence, the information regarding adult male subjects standing "guard" in front of the residence, the fact that there was no safe way to approach the residence without being detected, the possibility of the destruction of evidence, and Wanis Thonetheva's criminal history which reflected charges of Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony and several charges of Carrying a Concealed Weapon, agents contacted the Habersham County Sheriff's Office S.R.T. Unit to assist with the execution of the search warrant and the securing of the residence.

During the execution of the search warrant, a distraction device was utilized to provide additional safety measures for tactical officers making entry into the residence. Unknown to law enforcement at the time of the execution of the search warrant was the fact that there were several children located inside the residence and that the occupants had placed the bed of one of the children against the door that Wanis Thonetheva had just recently been using to distribute illegal narcotics from the residence. This was also the same door that S.R.T. Unit members used to make entry when executing the search warrant. Due to the fact that the child's bed was blocking the doorway on the inside of the residence and that there were no lights in the room at the time of entry, S.R.T. officers could not see the child at the time that the entry was made and the distraction device was deployed. The distraction device activated next to the child causing injury to the child. The child was transported to Eggleston Hospital in Atlanta.

Upon securing the residence and ensuring that immediate medical care was provided to the child, Mountain N.C.I.S. agents interviewed the mother of the child. According to the mother, they were staying at the residence temporarily and that she was aware that her nephew (Wanis Thonetheva) and his brother were dealing drugs out of the house.

