



May 1, 2020

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Weld County oil field shooter captured in Denver

A Brighton man suspected of firing randomly on oil field workers at a well pad on the south end of Weld County was arrested Thursday night in Denver.

Tyler James Van Auken, 31, was subsequently booked into the Weld County Jail on suspicion of menacing and possession of a weapon by a previous offender, both felonies, as well as misdemeanor charges of driving after revocation, prohibited use of weapons and reckless endangerment.

The Weld County Sheriff's Office's Strike Team tracked Van Auken to a hotel near Denver International Airport. Denver police officers and the Denver Police Department SWAT Team assisted deputies with the arrest.

Earlier this week, the sheriff's office obtained an arrest warrant for Van Auken after responding to a shots fired call about 2:15 p.m. Monday at an oil and gas site located near the intersection of Weld County roads 6 and 29 north of Brighton. Witnesses told deputies they were working at the well pad when a white SUV drove past and fired four or five shots.

Deputies later identified the vehicle as a white Chevy Trailblazer featuring a Denver Broncos sticker on the left side of the tailgate. Investigators identified and interviewed the registered owner, who said Van Auken was driving her vehicle while intoxicated and decided it would be fun to fire his handgun out the window.

Detectives with the sheriff's office's Investigative Unit spoke with Van Auken earlier this week by phone, but he refused to turn himself in or provide deputies with his location. The Strike Team was able to track him to a Denver hotel with the assistance of the FBI's Rocky Mountain Safe Streets Task Force.

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Van Auken is scheduled to appear at 2:30 p.m. today in Weld District Court for a bond hearing.

Anyone with information regarding this or any other crime is asked to call the Weld County Sheriff's Office at (970) 356-4015 or Northern Colorado Crime Stoppers at **1-800-222-TIPS (8477)**. **Tips can also be submitted through the Crime Stoppers website at www.crimeshurt.com. Those submitting tips through Crime Stoppers that lead to the arrest and filing of charges on a suspect(s) may be eligible for a cash reward.**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Steve Reams'.

Steve Reams – Sheriff