



Winter Haven Police Department

125 North Lake Silver Drive, NW
Winter Haven, Florida 33881

Telephone 863/291-5858
Fax 863/298-5217



Media Release

Date: October 30, 2009

Time: 2:00 p.m.

Contact: Sergeant Brad Coleman
(863) 291-5734

As released on October 28, 2009, Winter Haven Police Detectives are searching for Masaraha Ross who is believed to have last been in the company on her mother, 29 year old Ronkeya Holmes. Our investigators consider both Ross and Holmes to be missing and endangered at this time.

***Family members of Ronkeya Holmes and Masaraha Ross have now stated that Masaraha is 3 ½ years old and was born on March 24, 2006. They originally told our investigators that she was born in 2007.

This investigation is ongoing and involves the following law enforcement agencies:

Winter Haven Police Department (Florida)
Case #09-15365
Case #09-16061

Haines City Police Department (Florida)
Case #09-14752

Lake Mary Police Department (Florida)
Case #09-70000707

Florida Department of Law Enforcement

Federal Bureau of Investigation

Known involved parties include:

1. Masaraha L. Ross (b/f, D.O.B. 03-24-06)
5405 Robinson Circle
Savannah, GA
2. Ronkeya Holmes (b/f, D.O.B. 09-22-80)
5405 Robinson Circle
Savannah, GA
3. Lester Ross (b/m, D.O.B. 12-30-77)

- 703 Hemenway Drive NE
Winter Haven, FL
4. Joseph Wilcox (b/m, D.O.B. 09-16-75)
2504 Avenue O NW Apt. 2A
Winter Haven. FL

 5. Nafateria Fletcher (b/f, D.O.B. 08-30-78)
302 East 3rd Street
Alma, GA

Timeline:

- On April 14, 2009 Ronkeya Holmes met with Lester Ross in St. Augustine, Florida. Holmes and Lester Ross have a child together, Masaraha Ross, who Holmes was leaving with Lester Ross until she finished school.
- On October September 18, 2009 Ronkeya Holmes finished school and began attempting to get her daughter, Masaraha Ross, back from Lester Ross.
- On October 2, 2009 Ronkeya Holmes made contact with Lester Ross via text messaging and informed him that she be coming to Winter Haven to pick up her daughter.
- On October 3, 2009 Ronkeya Holmes arrived in Winter Haven and made contact with Lester Ross who told her that their daughter, Masaraha, was with out of town with an uncle and would be returning on October 4, 2009.
- On October 4, 2009 Lester Ross did not deliver Masaraha to Ronkeya Holmes as promised.
- Ronkeya Holmes returned to Georgia and on October 7, 2009 contacted Winter Haven Police to make a report.

(This information was reported to Winter Haven Police on October 7, 2009 by Ronkeya Holmes. See WHPD report 09-15365 for further detail.)

It should be noted that on October 7, 2009 we had no reason to believe that Masaraha Ross was missing or endangered and child custody, from a legal standpoint, had not been established.

- On October 14-15, 2009 Ronkeya Holmes was in Winter Haven attempting to get her daughter back and was staying with her former step father, Archie Forte.
- On October 16, 2009 Ronkeya Holmes stayed with her grandmother in Haines City, Florida.
- On October 17, 2009 Ronkeya Holmes was in Winter Haven was again staying with her former step father, Archie Forte.
- On October 18, 2009 Nafateria Fletcher came to Winter Haven because she was worried about her sister, Ronkeya Holmes.
- On October 18, 2009 at 10:52 p.m. Joseph Wilcox was stopped by Lake Mary Police while driving a 1992 Ford Escort driven to Florida by Ronkeya Holmes. Wilcox was arrested (charges unrelated to this case) and the vehicle was impounded (see LMPD

case #09-70000707).

- On October 20, 2009 Nafateria Fletcher had a phone conversation with Ronkeya Holmes. Fletcher states that she and Holmes are sisters and that Holmes told her that her car had been towed when Joseph Wilcox was stopped by police and arrested. Holmes would not tell Fletcher where she was and that she had Masaraha with her. Holmes also told Fletcher that she (Holmes) would “take care of everything.”
- On October 23, 2009 Nafateria Fletcher filed a report with the Winter Haven Police Department. Lester Ross was interviewed and he stated that he last saw Ronkeya Holmes and his daughter, Masaraha Ross, on October 18, 2009 when he turned Masaraha over to Holmes at the Haines City Wal-Mart. He states that he has not seen or heard from either of them since.

(This information was reported to Winter Haven Police on October 23, 2009 by Nafateria Fletcher. See WHPD report 09-16061 for further detail.)

This case is actively being investigated. Although we are considering Masaraha Ross and Ronkeya Holmes as **missing and endangered**, we have not obtained any physical evidence that a crime has been committed at this time. Information contained in the above time line has been provided to us by involved parties. Our investigators are in the process of confirming and fact checking all statements provided to date.

We are attempting to identify, locate, and interview anyone who has had contact with Masaraha Ross and Ronkeya Holmes in the past two weeks. Anyone with information is asked to contact Detective Amity McGee at (863) 291-5312.

Anyone with information who wants to remain anonymous and be eligible for a CASH REWARD is asked to call Polk County Crime Stoppers at 1-800-226-TIPS.

In accordance with Florida public records laws, redacted copies of case reports from this incident may be available to the media. Requests for reports should be made through the WHPD records division at (863) 291-5649.

***** End of Media Release *****