Written by Lauren Ohnesorge
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Avery County Sheriff Kevin Frye and Banner Elk Police Chief Bill Burleson held a press conference this afternoon to clarify what went on Saturday when Banner Elk Police Officer Fred Shrader fired on two suspects near Pappy's Barbeque.

The suspects, 20-year-old Crystal Marie Arnold of Roan Mountain and 27-year-old Nathaniel Scott Rainbolt of Hampton, Tennessee, used their pickup as a weapon, according to statements by Burleson and Frye. Shrader fired to protect himself and other officers when a roadblock set up north of Pappy's Barbeque failed to stop the suspects. The vehicle, a Toyota pickup, came directly at the officers, posing a direct threat, according to reports. Even before the suspects reached the roadblock, they attempted to run deputies off the road. Officers initially wanted to pull the vehicle over for drunk driving. More was at stake for the suspects, according to Frye.
A substance that field-tested positive for methamphetamine was found at the scene, he said. The pickup the suspects were driving was reported stolen in Mountain City, giving police more charges to add to the list.
Both suspects have been released from the hospital. Arnold has already been served warrants for possession of stolen property, possession of a schedule II controlled substance, and possession of drug paraphernalia. Rainbolt is being held in Carter County for other charges, but Avery will serve him warrants for a plethora of charges, including two counts of assault with a deadly weapon on a law enforcement officer.
Shrader is on routine administrative leave, and Burleson is unsure when he will return to work. When asked how Shrader is holding up, Burleson said he was doing okay. The State Bureau of Investigations is investigating, but according to Burleson, this is normal in an officer-involved shooting.