Written by Adam Hicks
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Boone Police are investigating the murder of a local businessman.

Boone Police Chief Bill Post said at about 8:30 p.m. Monday evening, Boone Police were called to check on the welfare of 40-year-old Jimmy Roberts after he didn't come home from his job at Gold and Closeout Connection Pawn at 499 E King Street in Boone.

The Boone Fire Department helped the investigators with the Boone Police get into the locked business.

Post said authorities found Roberts dead from an apparent gunshot wound. Roberts' vehicle was also discovered missing and items had been taken from the store.

Post said the Boone Police and the NC State Bureau of Investigation have a murder suspect in this case.

Police are searching for 28-year-old John Richard Gray of Virginia Beach.

Gray has used various aliases such as “John Creasman”, “John Spiker”, and “Brian Simms” and has traveled between Florida, North Carolina, Virginia, and Tennessee.

Gray has the word "Killa" tattooed on his right arm and "KKK" on his right leg.

Gray is believed to have left the area driving the victim’s vehicle, a pewter 2005 Chevrolet Silverado extended cab pickup displaying the North Carolina truck tag 4659AT, and is marked with the company name “Yard Art”.

Anyone with information as to the whereabouts of John Gray is asked to contact their nearest law enforcement agency or the Boone Police Department at 828-268-6900.

Aisling Broadcasting will pass along more information when it becomes available.