



# *HALE COUNTY*

# **SHERIFF**

**KENNETH W. ELLIS, SHERIFF**  
**JASON H. McCRORY, CHIEF DEPUTY**

1001 Main Street, Suite 18  
Greensboro, AL 36744  
(334) 624-3081, (334) 624-3082

---

## **OFFICIAL PRESS RELEASE**

---

January 18, 2011

### **DEPUTIES INVESTIGATE DROWNING NEAR LOCK 8 IN AKRON**

AKRON.....On Wednesday February 16<sup>th</sup>, deputies with the Hale County Sheriff's Office were dispatched to a stranded boater on the Black Warrior River near the Lock 8 area in Akron. Chief Deputy Jason McCrory says the call came in as a boater assist. Christopher Steward of Moundville advised he and his friend, Michael John Schmitt, of Tuscaloosa had fallen asleep after fishing on the river. Emergency personnel searched the area, and a professional diver, Marcus Menges, of Druid City Diver Rescue was called in to assist. At approximately 7:24 p.m, Menges located Mr. Schmitt's body near the boat they were fishing in. The body was located in about 4 feet of water with a water temperature of about 48 degrees. Preliminary cause of death is believed to be drowning. The Hale County Coroner's Office pronounced Schmitt dead at scene. The Hale County Sheriff's Office is currently assisting the Alabama Marine Police in this investigation. Any further developments can be viewed at the Sheriff's Office website, [www.halecoso.com](http://www.halecoso.com).