

Weekly Police Activity Report

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 09 March 2018 09:32



A BURNING QUESTION

3/6, Iyanbito

McKinley County Sheriff Dep. Monty Yazzie apparently had no questions as to what started a fire Monday on Red Sage Loop in Iyanbito that caused severe damage to a house in that Navajo community.

As he was headed to the scene of the fire, Metro Dispatch informed Yazzie that “an intoxicated person at the residence poured gasoline on the residence and lit [the house] on fire.”

When he arrived at the scene, the first thing he saw was that the living room was on fire. He also saw family members carrying buckets of water trying to out the fire out but it was having no affect.

He then noticed that on one side of the house, other family members were waving at him and pointing to a man who they had hog tied.

At about the same time, a Navajo police unit showed up, as the house was located on reservation land. Yazzie said he helped the officer, Israel Tsosie, detain the suspect and take him to his unit. He placed the suspect, identified as Justin Tsosie in the back seat of the Navajo police unit.

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Volunteer firefighters from the Fort Wingate area then arrived on scene and were able to put out the fire before the residence was totally destroyed. The suspect showed signs of being intoxicated and possibly on drugs, so he was taken to an area hospital to be checked out.

Yazzie said in his report that Tsosie continued to be uncooperative and was yelling as he was being transported from the scene. At that point, he turned over the scene to Navajo police.

UNGODLY VANDALS

3/4, Gamerco

The McKinley County Sheriff's Office was called to the Gamerco Church of God, 206 Ray Avenue in Gamerco, twice in three days to take a vandalism report.

The second report was taken about 8:50 am by MCSO Dep. Ivan Tsethlikai, who reported that someone had shattered two double panel windows at the church. When talking to the church's pastor, John B. Thumma, he was told that the two panes of glass had just been repaired two days before because vandals had scattered the original panes of glass on Saturday.

Thumma told Tsethlikai he found the same windows shattered March 2 by rocks. He had to spend \$160 each to get new glass put in. When he returned to church two days later, he found the new panes had been shattered by rocks.

Thumma said he had no suspects but wondered if the children who played in the nearby playground could have been responsible.

Tsethlikai said he saw one piece of rock still embedded in the window frame and also noticed a lot of shattered glass on the inside of the building. Deputies checked the outside of the building but could not find any footprints.

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Church personnel had checked the building and had found nothing missing and Pastor Thumma requested that the sheriff's office do security checks on the church for the next few days.

A \$1,500 SWINDLE

3/1, Gamerco

McKinley County Sheriff deputies were dispatched to Gamerco to fill out a report from Chanel Kinsel, who said she had been swindled out of \$1,500 in a car purchase that went bad.

Kinsel said she had been in contact with a woman on Craigslist concerning the purchase of a 2001 Chevy Silverado. She and her fiancé were emailing and phoning the woman, identified as Christine Edwards, back and forth to arrange for the purchase of the vehicle.

At Edward's request, the two sent her \$1500 in eBay gift cards to purchase the vehicle from eBay Motors but Kinsel has since found out that the entire transaction was a scam.

Kinsel told MCSO Dep. Jonathan Todachine Jr. that she had contacted eBay officials and they said they don't do eBay gift cards for the purchase of a truck. Company officials said, however, that they would investigate the situation and get back to her.

In the meantime, Todachine said he searched the address in Billings, Montana where the woman, who Kinsel said spoke with an east India accent, lived and found a one story house. He said he also called the number Kinsel had for the woman but no one answered.

Kinsel told Todachine that eBay officials said their investigation would take about two weeks.

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Speaking of scams, the sheriff's office is also investigating a report from another county resident who said that when she did a credit report, she found out that three credit cards had been taken out in her name over the past 10 years without her knowledge.

The Vanderwagen resident said she contacted the banks in question but was told she needed a police report before they could undertake an investigation which is why she contacted the sheriff's office.

She said she has also reported the identity theft to the Federal Trade Commission showing officials there what information she has about the credit cards taken out in her name.

A SCHOOL SHOOTING MYSTERY

2/27, THOREAU

McKinley County Sheriff officials still don't know what happened Feb. 27 at 7:30 pm when shots were reported near Thoreau High School.

A security guard at the school had called in the report and when deputies arrived at the school, they talked to the security guard, Logan Littlefield, and advised him to evacuate anyone in the building, which included school officials, students and parents.

In the meantime, MCSO Dep. Paul Davis Jr. went to the area near the baseball field where the shots were coming from and he talked to Littlefield who said security guards heard about 30 shots being fired accompanied by light flashes after every shot.

Littlefield told Davis that it was possible what they heard might have been fireworks, but an examination of the area as well as a nearby shed found no evidence of bullet casings or fireworks.

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Davis found a trailer nearby the scene. He watched the trailer for several minutes but saw no activity around it. By that time, there were three or four deputies at the school and they decided to wait for Navajo police to arrive before checking out the trailer.

Two Navajo police officers showed up and the group walked on foot to the trailer and talked to a man who lived inside. He told the officers he did not know what was going on and added that he had not heard any shots.

They then walked back to the school and told the security guards as well as the school officials there that they could not find any evidence that guns had been fired.

Larceny reports

2/26, Bluewater

The McKinley County Sheriff's Office is investigating two larceny reports filed in the last few weeks.

The first came from officials for the Rutherford Construction Company who reported that a 20-volt battery was taken from a backhoe that had been at a highway construction site on Highway 602 near the 13-mile marker.

The theft occurred either on Feb. 26 or 27, when the construction crew had left for the night. The toggle switches for the four-wheel vehicle were also taken. There are no suspects.

On Feb. 28, sheriff deputies also received a report from Lindsay Tillian who said that a trailer had been stolen from his property on Garcia Road in Bluewater. He said he found the fence cut but had no suspects.

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A neighbor said he saw a red truck in the area when the trailer may have been stolen.

Church vandal arrested

2/25, Gallup

Gallup Police reported the arrest of a Farmington man who was caught breaking the windows of a Gallup church Feb. 25.

Ryan Roy Chee, 35, was charged with breaking and entering and criminal damage to property.

Just after midnight, several Gallup, police officers responded to a report of a problem at the Christian Fellowship Church, 2495 East Aztec Avenue.

When Gallup Police Officer Darius Johnson got to the site, he was told that there was a man, later identified as Chee, inside the building. He said he saw two windows at the church broken and Chee kicking the front door.

He saw Chee begin to walk away from the building and arrested him. A witness came up to him and said he heard the windows being broken and saw Chee. Since Chee had cuts to his hand, he was taken first to a local hospital to get the cuts treated before he was transported to the McKinley County Adult Detention Center and booked.

A shoplifter caught

2/16, Gallup

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Fabian Jose Cantu, 32, of Gamerco was caught with the evidence on Feb. 16 after Gallup Police responded to a phone call from a security guard at Wal-Mart of a possible shoplifter.

Security officials had watched Cantu remove a cell phone from its packaging at the store and then walk out with it. He was followed to the Applebee's Restaurant just east of the store and police found him there trying to get the cell phone to work.

He was arrested and taken to the county jail where he was booked on shoplifting charges.