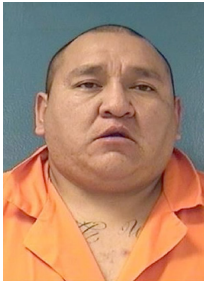# Facebook post helps officers catch trailer thief

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 30 March 2018 05:29

MILAN - The search for John Howard is over.

Howard, 32, was being sought by the McKinley County Sheriff's Office for the past week in connection with the theft of two flatbed trucks from the Thoreau area in February.

The sheriff's office received word the morning of March 28 that Howard had been arrested by police in Milan on burglary charges there and was now incarcerated in the Milan jail waiting to be arraigned on those charges.

Pat Salazar, the chief of police in Milan as well as the former head of the drug unit for the McKinley County Sheriff's Office, said Howard was arrested by his department in connection with the theft of a motorcycle and items from a tire shop on March 26.

Within hours of the thefts, Salazar and Arnold Noriega, a police officer in Milan and a former McKinley County Sheriff's deputy, with the help of the owner of the motorcycle, were able to track down a truck that was involved in transporting some of the stolen items, leading them to two men.

At that time, officers arrested Vincent Chapo after inspecting the prints of his shoes and matching them with prints found at the two robbery sites.

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They also arrested the driver, who refused to give his name, and was booked under the name of John Doe. He stayed that way until a member of the department remembered an entry on Facebook about a man being sought by McKinley County.

Salazar said when they took a good look at the face on the Facebook entry and compared it with their John Doe, they realized it was a match.

Howard is facing two counts of being an accessory to a commercial burglary, driving on a suspended or revoked license and having two outstanding bench warrants, one from Cinola County and the other from McKinley County.

Salazar said Howard will first have to deal with his charges in Cibola County and once that is done, he will be turned over to McKinley County to face charges there.

Staff Reports