

Officers catch convenience store robber

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A little bit of luck and some very good detective work led to the arrest of a Churchrock man March 26 for the armed robbery of the Dead Horse Mustang convenience store earlier that day.

Kyle Harrison, 34, is now facing nine charges — three counts of armed robbery, two counts of assault with intent to commit a violent robbery, three counts of larceny and one count of tampering with evidence.

Sgt. Robert Turney, an investigator with the McKinley County Sheriff's Office, said he learned of the robbery around 2:30 am, shortly after it happened.

The phone call from Deputy Johnson Lee informed him that a man had entered the store with a knife, terrorized the two clerks and he then left with a unspecified amount of money in a blue colored vehicle with the clerk's vehicle keys along with keys to the store.

The two clerks in the store were not injured, Turney said, but one was grabbed briefly. Both were "very scared."

The video surveillance tape of the robbery was not immediately available but an alert was put out asking for on duty police personnel to be on the lookout for the vehicle.

At 9 am, after reviewing the investigative report produced by Lee, Turney learned that the suspect had not worn any type of mask during the robbery. He also received a copy of the

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surveillance tape, which showed a very clear view of what happened earlier that day.

“The video was very scary,” Turney said.

Turney said he then began searching along Challenger Road in Churchrock for the vehicle when he received a phone call that the vehicle had been seen traveling on Nizhoni Boulevard, near the sheriff’s office.

MCSO Inv. Merle Bates, along with Lt. Eric Jim and Dep. Brandon Salazar, had managed to stop the suspect vehicle near Second Street and Nizhoni Boulevard and had taken the driver, Harrison, into custody after it was found he had a bench warrant out for his arrest.

During a search of his person for possible weapons, officers also discovered a small yellow baggie wrapped in a white tissue in one of his pockets. Inside was a white clear glassy substance, which later was identified as methamphetamine.

Harrison at first denied having anything to do with the robbery but when informed of the videotape and other evidence gathered against him, he confessed, said Turney.

Turney credited the swift end of the investigation to a little bit of luck along with some good detective work, pointing out that detectives later learned they had apprehended Harrison just 15 minutes before he was set to leave town.

Harrison was still in custody as of press time March 29, and he’s being held on several bonds: \$10,000 cash only; \$3,000 cash/surety for the drug possession charge; and \$1,000 cash/surety for a past DWI charge.

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