

Quintana's Music sign tagged

Written by By Cody Begaye Sun Correspondent
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The latest in a series of acts of vandalism in Gallup

Ryan and Rhonda Quintana, owners and operators of Quintana's Music and Indian Jewelry, 223 W. Coal Ave., arrived at the shop Dec. 16 to an unwelcome surprise. The sign over the entrance had been tagged by an unknown person.

Rhonda Quintana estimates the culprit must have struck sometime on Dec. 15, after the monthly ArtsCrawl festivities ended the night before.

The damage to the sign is estimated at about \$1,000, according to police. The sign was hand-painted by someone who no longer lives in Gallup.

Quintana added this is not the first instance of vandalism the store has experienced in the past several months.

"We had another incident where our utility trailer in the back was broken into," Quintana said. "We didn't have any music equipment in there, but they stole some Christmas lights and busted

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up the door.”

The trailer break-in happened toward the end of October.

“Taggers have been wreaking havoc downtown for a while,” Quintana continued. “Our door in the back was tagged a while back.”

Quintana said she spoke with Gallup Police Department about the incident, and was told there is a task force looking into vandalism matters like this. Still, she thinks there's cause for concern.

“My biggest concern is if the vandal is that blatant, to climb up on the roof or use a ladder, what's next?” Quintana said.

Quintana's concerns are heightened because the cold weather has brought with it a series of inebriated people, drugged out people, and violent people in downtown Gallup.

With the City of Gallup moving ahead with its Coal Avenue Commons construction project, Quintana said this is the right time for them to get a handle on the maliciousness of vandals that strike downtown businesses.

“Most of these businesses here are run by families. They didn't just hurt my building, they hurt my family,” Quintana said.

Quintana said she had reached out to the city through their *Click It to Fix It* feature on their website, and the city has since sent sign shop Dynamic Signs and Design out to fix the problem. She said this feature could help other people hit by the tagging get the situation under control.

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While having to shed light on the increase in crime during the winter is not ideal for tourists and shoppers, Quintana said it has to be brought to the attention of the city.

"We want people to come downtown and to feel safe, but something needs to be done," Quintana said.

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