

DWI: Gallup police sergeant busted on motorcycle

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Refuses field sobriety, breath tests

A Gallup police sergeant reportedly went for a short, but drunken ride on his motorcycle while off duty.

The driver – Sgt. Neil Yazzie.

The story unfolded April 3, shortly after 1 am, when Gallup police requested assistance from New Mexico State Police.

NMSP Officer Alejandro Solis-Torres responded to the scene at the intersection of Ford Drive and Aztec Avenue. He immediately noticed Yazzie's motorcycle on its side in the road.

After checking the motorcycle's license plate, Solis-Torres saw that the registration was suspended.

According to the criminal complaint, GPD shift supervisor Officer Dominic Molina told Solis-Torres that a disturbance initially came from the 49er Lounge, 1000 E. Hwy. 66. It's not clear from the complaint whether the call was about Yazzie or another situation.

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Meanwhile, Officer Philamena Chischilly responded to the call at the 49er, and reportedly observed a black motorcycle leaving the area and proceeded to follow it, and noticed the driver was “swerving all over the roadway,” the complaint states.

“... Officer P. Chischilly observed the driver falling off the motorcycle while stopped [at the light] and observed the driver having trouble” standing up his motorcycle.

When Chischilly pulled the driver over, she realized it was her supervisor, Yazzie.

As Solis-Torres was getting the background information from Molina, he saw Yazzie trying to put his sweater on backwards while swaying and stumbling.

Next, he asked Yazzie if he’d been drinking, and he admitted that he had consumed alcohol before he hopped on his motorcycle.

According to Solis-Torres’s report, Yazzie appeared to be drunk. Solis-Torres determined that Yazzie was not able to drive and arrested him for his first DWI, aggravated, as he refused to take standard field sobriety tests and the alcohol breath test.

In an interview with the *Sun* on April 6, Gallup Police’s Patrol Capt. Erin Toadlena-Pablo explained that Yazzie was placed under administrative leave after his arrest.

“When we have an employee involved in an incident as far as a policy violation – or when you look at someone who in this case was arrested – the person is placed on administrative leave and of course our internal affairs gathers information and we look at that,” Toadlena-Pablo said.

Yazzie will be on administrative leave until the investigation into his case is resolved. His pre-trial hearing is scheduled for May 4.

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