

Alleged truck thief arrested

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 07 October 2022 04:22



A call to Metro Dispatch about several intoxicated persons in a vehicle led to Teilani Lahaleon, 36, of Zuni, being arrested for driving a stolen vehicle.

About 6:26 am on Sept. 20, the calling party at Maverick East, 3540 E. Hwy. 66, stated to Metro Dispatch that three males and one female were reportedly cruising around the building in a black Ford F-150. The trio was allegedly sharing a bottle of vodka.

The caller stated the F-150 had parked next to another black truck and the occupants were standing around the vehicle.

Metro Dispatch ran the license plate number given by the calling party and confirmed it matched a vehicle that had been registered as stolen by the Zuni Police Department.

Gallup Officer Warren Bowannie pulled near Indian Hills Elementary School, and saw the suspect vehicle parked outside of the store. He waited for a backup unit to arrive before pulling into the parking lot, activating his emergency lights to prevent the F-150 from leaving.

Bowannie confirmed the license plate and the active warrant for the stolen vehicle. He conducted a felony stop and detained the driver, Lahaleon. The three other passengers at the scene were detained as well.

Lahaleon reportedly did not cooperate with Bowannie at the scene, and stated it was her

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brother who was in possession of the truck. Officer Gilbert Gonzales questioned one of the passengers, Erikk Waikaniwa, who stated he had been picked up by Lahaleon on Sept. 19. He told officers Lahaleon had asked if they could “go cruise” and also stated he didn’t know the truck had been stolen or who owned the truck.

One of the other passengers told officers she and her nephew came to the store to help Lahaleon after hearing she was having vehicle trouble. They reportedly weren’t involved in the theft and were released at the scene.

Waikaniwa was transported to a local hospital to be medically evaluated for a preexisting condition. Metro Dispatch advised that Waikaniwa had one active warrant for his arrest.

Lahaleon was placed under arrest despite allegedly repeating it was her brother who took the truck. While en route to Gallup Police Department for processing, Metro Dispatch advised Bowannie that Lahaleon had three active warrants for her arrest.

Bowannie transported Lahaleon to McKinley County Adult Detention Center, where she was booked on the three warrants and receiving or transferring a stolen vehicle. The next court update was not available as of press time.

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