

Gamerco man jailed on robbery, battery, tampering charges

Written by gallupsun

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Victim reportedly stabbed 19 times

By Bernie Dotson

Sun Correspondent

A Gamerco man remained in jail at the McKinley County Adult Detention Center Sept. 23 on a \$15,000 cash-only bond after being charged with robbery, aggravated battery, and tampering with evidence, according to an arrest warrant.

Troy Pinto, 43, is the primary suspect in the Sept. 17 stabbing of Elbert Smith at a location behind Home Depot at 530 Kachina St. Smith told Gallup police detectives that he'd been drinking at the Home Depot location with two males and a female. Each was Native American, according to the warrant.

Smith said the two males jumped him and stole his wallet, cell phone, clothes and \$14 in cash.

The arrest warrant indicates that Smith suffered multiple facial bruises and swelling.

"Smith stated that the group might have set him up," the warrant states.

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Smith told law enforcement authorities that he was threatened with a knife and that one of the males demanded his debit card and PIN number.

Smith was taken to Gallup Indian Medical Center due to the seriousness of the injuries, the warrant states. Smith was able to get the stolen belongings back as Gallup officers ultimately apprehended the three.

Pinto was ultimately arrested by Gallup police. His wife was taken to Gallup Detox because she was drunk, the arrest warrant states. The other male was not arrested.

Pinto told detectives that he was actually trying to protect Smith during the fight. He said he bent over Smith at one instance, telling investigators that he may have stabbed Smith, but he “does not know how many times.” Pinto said he believed that he and Smith were related by clan.

According to Smith, Pinto said to him at one point, “Give me your PIN number or I’ll f***** kill you.”

Pinto stated in the arrest warrant papers that he didn’t remember taking Smith’s personal belongings, but he remembers giving Dick \$4 of Smith’s money. Pinto's wife was later released after getting out of Gallup Detox.