

Alleged horse thief wanted

Written by gallupsun
Friday, 02 June 2017 19:56

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By Babette Herrmann

Sun Editor

For the past couple of days social media buzzed with news of quarter horse nicknamed “Monte” that was reported stolen from TravelCenters of America truck stop, 3404 W. Highway 66, May 31.

Luckily, the horse was found safe and sound yesterday. But the suspect is still at large.

TA video surveillance helped police to identify 18-year-old Wilbert Billy as the alleged horse-napper. Gallup Police Department issued an arrest warrant on Friday for Billy. He's wanted on one count of “larceny of livestock,” a third-degree felony.

According to the criminal complaint, the unfortunate incident occurred when horse transporter Steven Dyess stopped at TA to get some rest during the early afternoon of May 31. It was a long haul for the 11-year-old horse, from Arizona to Colorado, so Dyess took Monte out of the trailer and tied to him to it so he could stretch his legs. It was also a chance for Dyess to grab a few minutes of shut eye in the cab of the truck.

Sometime during Dyess’s catnap, Billy reportedly approached the ash grey quarter horse with four white socks and untied his rope, then walked away with him. When he gained some distance from Dyess, he hopped on Monte and rode off. Dyess tried to catch up with Billy, but to no avail.

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Tim "TC" Show was desperate to find his Monte. His wife Mary Show immediately started posting photos of Monte on Facebook groups, asking for Gallup and Navajo Nation residents help in finding him. Monte's full horse name is "Yo Blue Doop."

Gallup Police Department Det. Lt. Rosanne Morrisette wasn't content with letting the matter fall by the wayside. On June 1, with the assistance of Det. Philamena Chischilly, the two headed to NCI detox center to see if they had any information on Billy.

An NCI supervisor told the detectives that Billy's father stole a horse from him about four years earlier, and drew a map of where the suspect resided at, 908B Hunters Point Rd. It was the lead that police needed as it was the same direction that Billy was headed in when he stole Monte.

While driving in the area, detectives ran into New Mexico Livestock Brand Inspector Byron Murphy. They asked him to follow them to Billy's residence. When they arrived there, Billy's mom, Nettie Billy, said her son was in possession of the horse, and had told her that he was watching it for someone. The night before, Nettie Billy said "they" put a pen together for Monte, some 500 yards from the residence.

The area was hidden, as detectives had to cut through "trees and sagebrush," to find Monte, who's valued at \$15,000, according to the criminal complaint. Murphy road Monte out of the area, and Dyess met up with detectives and loaded the horse onto the trailer.

Mary Show took to the *Gallup Sun* Facebook page to express her gratitude to those who helped locate Monte.

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Thank you Gallup police department and brand inspectors," she wrote. "Truly a miracle."