Staff reports

Local law enforcement officials are looking for a tall, heavy-set man in his forties in connection with a sexual assault that occurred Feb. 9, north of Gallup.

According to a report from the Gallup Police Department, the victim was leaving the Octavia Fellin Public Library at about 8:15 pm when a man approached her and asked for a ride. She told police she ignored the man but when she opened her door he pushed an object against the right side of her back and told her not to scream.

The assailant then allegedly pushed her into the passenger side seat and pointed a handgun at her, telling her to give him her phone. She described the weapon as a silver handgun with a black handle.

Once he had her phone, the man drove north to the T&R Market, where the victim told police she was sexually assaulted. After the assault, she said the man threw the phone at her and began walking north on U.S. Highway 491, towards Tohatchi.

The victim then got into her car and drove to her mother's house to call police since her phone had lost battery.

When she finally reached police, the woman estimated about 30 minutes had passed since she saw the man begin his walk. The McKinley County Sheriff's Office was contacted and conducted a search along Highway 491 but could not find the suspect.

The victim said the man appeared to be intoxicated. She described him as heavy-set, about six

feet tall with thick black eyebrows. She said once in her car he put on a ski mask.

GPD Capt. Marinda Spencer said the ethnicity of the suspect is not know at this time.

When police arrived to take her statement, the victim declined medical assistance, telling officers that her mother would take her to the hospital.

The victim reported being bitten on the neck by the man, and officers overserved red marks on the side of her neck at the scene. The woman also had pain in both her biceps and on her knees. Officers observed abrasion marks on her knees but said they could find no marks on her biceps, according to the police report.

The victim told police she did not hit or scratch the suspect.

Spencer said on Feb. 13 that police are still searching for the suspect.