

## **Gallup Police Department: Bandits make off with cigs, pipes, cash**

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent  
Friday, 08 April 2016 04:32

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The Gallup Police Department is looking for the culprits who robbed a west side gas station of cigarettes, pipes and an undisclosed amount of cash.

On March 24 at about 6:24 am, Officer Jesse Diaz was dispatched to 3120 W. Historic Highway 66 in connection to a burglary of a gas station and convenience store called Gallup Store. Upon arrival at the station, Diaz discovered that the front glass window of the business was shattered.

Diaz noted in the police report that an owner of Gallup said there were 12 pipes and scales taken from the glass display case closet to the front door of the store. Two of the missing pipes were valued at \$59 and \$69 apiece, Diaz wrote in the report. "The other 10 pipes were valued at \$19.99 and the scale at \$60," Diaz wrote.

The owner told Diaz that another glass case inside the store with 15 more pipes in it was broken, with each pipe valued at \$26.99. Also, Diaz wrote, three more pipes valued at \$19.99 and 30 others that were stolen were estimated to cost around \$7 apiece. An estimated \$120 in cigarettes and lighters were taken - as well as \$150, Diaz wrote.

"After speaking (to the owner) of the business, I observed no fingerprints on the glass cases," Diaz noted. Diaz noted that another GPD officer lifted what appeared to be a fingerprint from the counter of the business. No further information on that fingerprint was available Tuesday.

The Gallup Store burglary isn't the only incident of its kind to take place along the retail sector of West Historic Highway 66. On March 7, vandals broke into the Gallup Inn, 3275 W. Highway 66, and trashed the fenced-in two-story hotel.

- East Side Gilbert Ortega Shell station victimized

The Gallup Police Department responded to a similar glass-breaking type break-in and theft at the Gilbert Ortega Shell gas station, 3306 E. Highway 66, on March 26. According to the police report filed by Officer Eric Lope, burglars broke a west side window of the business at about

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1:27 a.m. and helped themselves to whatever they could get.

“We came across a broken glass door on the west side entrance and a broken window next to the west entrance,” Lope wrote in the report. “Outside the business were rocks by the west side entrance door that were used to break the window.”

Lope noted in the report that nearby on the sidewalk were cigarettes and a broken alcohol bottle. Upon entering the business, Lope said there were cans of chewing tobacco, more cigarettes, phone chargers and a “big rock” on the floor. Lope stated in the report that two unknown males broke and got threw the broken glass door after a second attempt, according to video recordings of the incident.

A description of the two suspects was given in Lope’s report. Several boxes of cigarettes, alcohol and chewing tobacco were stolen, Lope stated. A female clerk at the store said Wednesday that two teenagers, probably from the surrounding Indian Hills neighborhood, she said, were believed to be behind the vandalism.

The value of the damaged door windows was estimated to be around \$1.400, Lope wrote. Both of the gas stations in question have been burglarized in similar fashion within the last year, with practically the same kinds of items being stolen. Both stations were closed at the time of the break-ins.

***By Bernie Dotson***

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