

Shoplifting to support a drug habit?

Written by By Molly Ann Howell Sun Correspondent
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An Albuquerque man was about to be charged with shoplifting, but then the police found fentanyl on him, so he received another charge for that.

On March 15, around 4:27 pm, Gallup Police Officer Christopher Dawes was dispatched to the Home Depot 530 Kachina St., in reference to a shoplifting call.

When he arrived at the store, the employee pointed out the alleged thief to Dawes. Edward Begay, 34, from Albuquerque, was sitting behind a stack of bags.

When Dawes spoke to the employee, he explained that Begay had been trying to swipe a card to pay for his items, but when it didn't work, he began to walk out without paying.

According to Dawes's report, Begay stole a pair of Husky gloves and a Reinforce cable light. The employee said that the items cost almost \$43 in total, and that the store wanted to press charges.

When Dawes approached Begay, he was wearing a black purse around his neck. When he did a pat down on the suspect, Dawes found a pocketknife in Begay's right pocket. Dawes took the knife away.

Dawes handcuffed Begay and put him in the backseat of his patrol car. He called Metro Dispatch and learned that Begay had two active warrants for failure to comply with his

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probation. Dawes arrested Begay for the active warrants.

After he arrested him, Dawes went to check out Begay's black purse. He found a small green container, and when he shook it he heard some things moving around in it.

Dawes asked Begay what was in the container, to which Begay replied, "the blues." He then explained that that meant fentanyl.

Gallup Narcotic Agent Lionel Desidero confirmed that Begay had 10 fentanyl pills on him at the time of his arrest.

Begay was charged with possession of a controlled substance and shoplifting, and Dawes took him to the McKinley County Adult Detention Center. His preliminary examination is scheduled for March 30.

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