

Beer by the dozen stolen from restaurant

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 18 August 2023 05:01



A man tried to steal 43 beers from a local restaurant.

On July 31, around 5:15 am, Gallup Police officers were dispatched to La Barraca, 1303 E. Hwy. 66, after someone allegedly broke into the Mexican restaurant.

According to his report, Officer Patrick Largo noticed that the glass on the restaurant's front door was shattered when he arrived at the scene. There was enough space now for a person to have crawled through the broken door.

The officers met with one of the restaurant's employees, who said the restaurant's owners were on their way. The employee said he showed up to work that morning and noticed that the front door was shattered. He also noticed several beer bottles laying on the floor.

The officers were able to watch a security video, and in the footage, they could see a man, who was later identified as Creighton Vacit, walking around the business around 4 am. He had very short hair, a mustache, and two visible tattoos. He was wearing a tank top, dark jeans, and black boots.

Vacit, 40, allegedly headed toward the refrigerator in the kitchen and found multiple beer bottles inside. He reportedly took off his shirt and began putting some of the bottles inside it. He also grabbed several plastic bags to hold more beer.

Around 4:15, the suspect left the restaurant. In total, Vacit reportedly walked out with four plastic

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bags full of beer. The restaurant managers estimated that he stole about 43 beers and that it would cost about \$1,200 to fix the broken front door.

After filing the report, the officers left the scene.

However, the restaurant owners called Metro Dispatch around 6:30 am saying they knew where Vacit was. They said he was hiding behind Speedway Central at 1223 E. Hwy. 66.

Largo found Vacit sitting inside a red Chevrolet Lumina with Arizona plates. As Largo approached the vehicle, Vacit got out of the car. He told Largo he was waiting for his friend who was using the bathroom inside the Speedway Central.

Vacit told Largo that his name was "Chris Cellicion." Largo told him that he was investigating a burglary and placed him in his patrol car. After doing this, Largo approached the Chevrolet Lumina and noticed a Modelo beer bottle on the driver's side floorboard. There were also two more beer bottles hidden in the backseat. Officers eventually found 15 beer bottles in the car, all of various brands.

After noticing the beers in the car, Largo spoke to La Barraca's managers again. One of the managers said she was in the back of the restaurant when she noticed a ripped plastic bag and some beer bottles in a bush. Another person also noticed a man in a white tank top hiding near Speedway before jumping a fence.

Largo found two abandoned beers in a bush about 30 feet from the restaurant. He found a third beer in a plastic bag.

The witness, who was a friend of the restaurant's managers, told Largo that he had come over once he heard what had happened. He said he and the restaurant managers were looking around outside the restaurant when he glanced over toward the Speedway Central and saw a man who looked like the man from the security video. He also said he saw Largo speaking to the same man and confirmed that the man sitting in Largo's patrol car was the man from the video.

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After speaking to the witness, Largo walked back to this patrol car to talk to “Chris.” Largo eventually found out “Chris” was really Vacit.

Initially Vacit told Largo that he didn’t know anything about the burglary, and that a stranger had sold him the beer. He said that the stranger had told him the beer was stolen.

Finally, after also speaking with Sgt. Matthew Graham, Vacit admitted to stealing the beers. He was charged with burglary and criminal damage. His preliminary hearing is scheduled for Aug. 30.

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