GPD converges on Super 8 hotel

Two Kentucky fugitives with outstanding warrants remained jailed Feb. 22 at the McKinley County Adult Detention Center without bond, officials said.

Derrick Thomas, 23, of Mt. Sterling, Ky., and Elizabeth Neal, 22, of Owen, Ky., were taken into custody on first degree assault and Neal was jailed on a bond violation warrant, according to police documents.

Capt. Marinda Spencer, public information officer with the Gallup Police Department, said a “tip” was received at GPD from Kentucky authorities about Thomas and Neal possibly staying at the Super 8 hotel at 1715 W. Historic Highway 66 in Gallup.

Thomas allegedly shot two people on Feb. 17 in Owen County, Ky., and fled the scene. The alert given to Gallup police indicated that Thomas was armed and dangerous, Spencer said. Thomas and Neal were taken into custody and the two children that were with them were turned over to the state’s Children, Youth and Families Department, Spencer said. The names and ages of the two daughters are Lily, 1, and Alice, 3.

In describing how GPD converged on Super 8, Spencer said police set up a perimeter around the hotel and activated the Emergency Response Team.

“The (ERT) made contact with the suspects as they were leaving the hotel in the parking lot and took them into custody without incident,” Spencer said. “No one was hurt in the arrest.”

Spencer said Thomas and Neal were immediately taken to GPD headquarters for questioning and jailed at MCDC.

The warrants indicate that Thomas may have been upset over a custody arrangement with Neal. The two shot are believed to be family members of Neal. Thomas was wanted on an assault charge for allegedly shooting 54-year-old James Neal in the hand and leg during an argument. He is also a suspect in the shooting of Amber Neal in the arm during the same altercation.

Spencer said the couple will be extradited to Kentucky no later than next week.

By Bernie Dotson
Sun Correspondent