

## Forced to drive?

Written by Staff Reports  
Friday, 17 November 2023 06:15

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### Suspect facing criminal charges after contacting police

A woman who claims she was forced to drive a stolen vehicle is now facing criminal charges.

On Nov. 2, around 6:45 am, Gallup Police Officer Vincent Thompson was on duty when a woman, who was later identified as Keri McCray, flagged him down outside the Love's gas station at 3380 W. Hwy. 66. McCray, 23, told Thompson she was trying to find her sister, who she had last seen walking eastbound after getting off a Greyhound bus.

Thompson and Officer Jerald Watchman were handling another call at the time, so they told McCray they would come back to assist her. While they were dealing with the other situation, the manager of the U Save Truck Stop, located at 1405 W. Hwy. 66, told the officers that there was a suspicious vehicle outside his business. The man said a woman had parked the vehicle and left it running while she ran off yelling.

Thompson and Watchman would soon learn that these two incidents were connected.

They checked the suspicious vehicle, which was a Jeep with Colorado license plates. Metro Dispatch informed the officers that the vehicle had been stolen out of Bernalillo, Colorado.

The officers were able to watch the U Save Truck Stop's security camera footage. In the video a woman in a blue jacket with her short hair in a ponytail can be seen. According to his report,

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Thompson recognized her as the woman who approached him asking him for help in finding her sister.

In the video, McCray drives the Jeep up to the business and parks it behind a red truck. She gets out of the vehicle and walks to the side entrance of the business. She is inside the business for a while, and then she runs out of the store. She then runs out of the camera's vantage point.

At some point, Watchman and Thompson arrive in the video, responding to the aforementioned call. After the officers appear in the video, McCray reappears, and she runs to the Jeep and gets into the driver's seat. She reportedly sits in the Jeep for some time, and then gets out, grabbing something from inside the vehicle. After she gets out of the vehicle, she runs eastbound, leaving the vehicle on.

After watching the security footage, Thompson found McCray and another woman walking near the Westend Donut & Deli (3030 W. Hwy. 66). He placed McCray in the back of his patrol car and drove her back to the U Save Truck Stop.

In his report Thompson notes that the Jeep's exterior had been spray painted black.

McCray told Thompson that she was forced to drive the Jeep by another woman. She said the woman had hit her in the back and threatened her. The woman reportedly told McCray not to leave the vehicle anywhere.

Things reportedly became complicated when McCray told the woman that she needed to pick up her girlfriend from the Greyhound bus stop. The woman allegedly threatened both McCray and her girlfriend.

McCray allegedly had to drive from the woman's house and was late to pick up her girlfriend. She said she couldn't call anyone because her phone had no service.

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After hearing McCray's story, Watchman tried calling the Jeep's registered owner, but he was unsuccessful. Someone reportedly picked up the phone, but then promptly hung up. Xtreme Towing came and picked up the vehicle, leaving it at the Gallup Police Department.

McCray was charged with receiving or transferring a stolen vehicle. Her preliminary hearing is scheduled for Nov. 15.