

Gamerco man jailed on robbery, battery, tampering charges

Written by By Bernie Dotson Sun Correspondent
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Victim reportedly stabbed 19 times

A Gamerco man remained in jail at the McKinley County Adult Detention Center Sept. 23 on a \$15,000 cash-only bond after being charged with robbery, aggravated battery, and tampering with evidence, according to an arrest warrant.

Troy Pinto, 43, is the primary suspect in the Sept. 17 stabbing of Elbert Smith at a location behind Home Depot at 530 Kachina St.

Smith told Gallup Police Department detectives that he'd been drinking at the Home Depot location with two males and a female. Each was Native American, according to the warrant.

Smith said the two males jumped him and stole his wallet, cell phone, clothes, and \$14 in cash.

The arrest warrant indicates that Smith suffered multiple facial bruises and swelling.

"Smith stated that the group might have set him up," the warrant states.

Smith told law enforcement authorities that he was threatened with a knife and that one of the males demanded his debit card and PIN number.

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Smith was taken to Gallup Indian Medical Center due to the seriousness of the injuries. The stolen belongings were returned to him, as Gallup officers ultimately apprehended the three suspects.

Pinto was ultimately arrested by Gallup police. His wife was taken to Gallup Detox because she was drunk, the arrest warrant states. The other male was not arrested.

Pinto told detectives that he was actually trying to protect Smith during the fight. He said he bent over Smith at one point, and told investigators he may have stabbed Smith, but he “does not know how many times.”

Pinto said he believed that he and Smith were related by clan.

According to Smith, at one point, Pinto said to him, “Give me your PIN number or I’ll f***** kill you.”

Pinto stated in the arrest warrant papers that he didn’t remember taking Smith’s personal belongings, but he remembers giving the wife \$4 of Smith’s money. Pinto’s wife was later released from Gallup Detox.