



February 1, 2009

Pair charged with shoplifting at Wal-Mart

Two Pontiac men have been charged with shoplifting, one of them a felony, in connection with an incident at the Rochester Hills Wal-Mart store Jan. 15.

Charlie Odneal, 27, was charged Jan. 17 with first-degree retail fraud, a 10-year felony. Johnas Taylor, 25, was charged with second-degree shoplifting, a 93-day misdemeanor. Each was held on \$2,500 cash bond; Odneal has since posted bond and been released.

Detectives at the Oakland County Sheriff's Office said the two men were observed inside the store as they allegedly removed a phone and a PlayStation 3 controller from their packaging and attempted to conceal them. But they realized they had been observed and left the store without the merchandise. They were confronted by an employee, who told them police were on the way.

Taylor allegedly said he had a gun and couldn't stick around. The men fled but were caught near Auburn and Adams roads. In the car was merchandise believed stolen from another Wal-Mart store.

"You don't have to actually take something from the store to be charged with shoplifting," said Lt. Ray White. He said the act of concealing merchandise, even if unsuccessful, qualifies as retail fraud.

White said both men have extensive criminal records. Odneal was charged with the more serious offense because of previous convictions. Taylor was also charged with driving with a suspended license.

Oodneal is scheduled to appear before 52-3 District Court Judge Julie Nicholson Feb. 9 for an exam on the charge. Taylor is scheduled for a pretrial, also before Nicholson, on Feb. 5.

Overdose

Police and paramedics were called to the Meijer store on Rochester Road around 8:30 p.m. Jan. 29 after someone was seen slumped over the wheel of a Chevy Lumina in the parking lot. The Rochester Hills Fire Department had to break a window on the car to gain access; they found the victim unresponsive and started CPR. The victim was revived and transported to Crittenton Hospital for treatment.

The Oakland County Sheriff's Department blamed a drug overdose and said crack cocaine was found in the car.

Break-in

A Baker Street couple reported the theft of a snowblower from their garage sometime Jan. 29. They said the garage door had been opened and closed several times between 5 a.m., when the \$1,000 Toro was last seen, and 5 p.m., when it was discovered missing. Nothing else appeared to have been disturbed. Police said there was no sign of forced entry.

Larceny

A window was smashed on a 2005 Volvo overnight Jan. 28-29 while it was parked on Windwood. A GPS unit was stolen.
