

JOPLIN

POLICE

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Jason Burns
Chief of Police

Date: March 11, 2015
Origin: Department PIO
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NEWS RELEASE

On March 12, 2015, at 8:05 AM, a Joplin Police Officer made contact with parked red, Ford Mustang in the 1900 block of S. Main St.

The reason for contacting the vehicle is because the officer suspected one or more of the occupants had arrest warrants.

The female passenger of the vehicle had exited the parked vehicle and the officer made contact with her. He confirmed her identity as Shyla N. Figueroa, 530 Walnut Ridge, Joplin, Mo.

Figueroa had two Joplin City Warrants (Failure to Appear for Possession of Paraphernalia and Obstruction, and two Duquesne City Warrants for her arrest. (No Valid Driver's License and Vision Obstruction)

The officer attempted make contact with the operator of the parked vehicle and upon opening the door of the vehicle, paraphernalia fell out of the vehicle. The driver drove away at a high rate of speed. Officers did not engage in a pursuit of the vehicle but broadcast to other officer to be on the lookout for the red Mustang.

Shortly thereafter, a Joplin Officer observed the vehicle at 32nd and Finley. The vehicle began operating in an erratic manner at high speeds. The officer did not engage in a pursuit of the vehicle.

Another Joplin Officer observed the vehicle at 41st and Indiana. The Mustang had driven into a cul-de-sac or dead-end road. The officer stopped and parked his car on 41st at 41st and Indiana. The officer remained in the vehicle at a distance from the vehicle in order to observe it.

The vehicle began driving backwards at a high rate of speed, (estimated by the officer as forty-miles per hour) toward the officer's parked vehicle and narrowly missed striking the officer's patrol vehicle.

Because the driver operated the vehicle with criminal negligence and created a substantial risk of death or serious physical injury to the officer, the patrol officer engaged in a pursuit with the vehicle.

The driver continued to flee east onto 32nd Street. At 32nd St. and Arizona, the driver struck to vehicles and continued to flee to the east where his vehicle ceased to function. There were no injuries reported in the accidents.

The drivers was identified as John L. Swinney, Weir Kansas. Swinney was arrested and charged with the following; 1) Possession of Paraphernalia, 2) Driving While Intoxicated, 3) Leaving the Scene of an Accident, (two charges) 4) 2nd Degree Assault on Law Enforcement Officer, and 5) one Duquesne warrant for Failure to Appear-Possession of Paraphernalia. The charges submitted by Joplin Officers will be forwarded to the Newton County Prosecutor.

Photograph is attached.

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John Swinney