



Ryan MacPherson

17-year-old charged with DWI at checkpoint



Anthony Borrelli

Crime and Chaos

Tompkins County Sheriff's deputies who were at a roadside sobriety checkpoint from Aug. 29 to Aug. 30 have charged a teenager with drunken driving. A 17-year-old was charged with misdemeanor counts of driving while intoxicated, driving with a blood alcohol content of 0.08 percent or greater, and aggravated driving while intoxicated. Police did not release the teenager's identity. The checkpoint was conducted by the sheriff's office and Cayuga Heights Police Department.

Family, dog assault

State police used a Taser to subdue a Unadilla man accused of assaulting family members and their dog.

Ryan A. MacPherson, 22, was charged Aug. 27 after troopers responded to a 911 call of a dispute in a residence on Lockwood Road in Unadilla, Otsego County. He got into a fight with his mother and sister and also assaulted the family dog, forcing them to flee the house and call for help, police said.

MacPherson then locked the door and started smashing items in the house — a TV and a lamp, according to police. He was shot with a Taser after he resisted attempts to handcuff him and was then found with some marijuana, police said.

MacPherson was charged with misdemeanor counts of menacing, criminal mischief, resisting arrest and cruelty to animals. He also faces harassment and unlawful possession of marijuana violations.

He was arraigned in Unadilla Town Court and sent to the Otsego County jail with bail set at \$5,000 cash or \$15,000 bond.

Stealing beer

Police say a man stole beer from the Wal-Mart store in Johnson City, after being previously banned from the property.

Shawn M. Spry, 50, of Binghamton, was charged Aug. 27 with a felony count of third-degree burglary. Johnson City police took him into custody after officers responded to a shoplifting complaint.

Spry was arraigned in Johnson City Village Court and sent to the Broome County jail.

Bank account drained

Two women stole a debit card and withdrew money from another person's bank account, police said.

Broome County Sheriff's Office detectives said the bank funds were withdrawn in June. Cassandra Bennett, 23, of Johnson City, and Amanda Lewis, 23, of Montrose, Pa., were identified as suspects after an investigation, police said Monday.

Both were charged with felony

See **CRIME, Page 6A**

LOTTERIES

N.Y. Lottery: (518) 388-3300
www.nylottery.org

N.Y. Daily (day): 6-5-0
N.Y. Win 4 (day): 2-0-0-2
N.Y. Daily (night): 8-8-4
N.Y. Win 4 (night): 0-9-3-5
N.Y. Take 5 (Thursday): 6-20-26-36-38
N.Y. Pick 10 (Thursday): 2-5-10-16-20-24-28-30-38-48-49-50-52-55-59-61-62-63-67-77
N.Y. Cash4Life (Thursday): 20-33-46-49-51
Cash Ball: 4
See Monday's editions for Mega Millions results.

CORRECTION

A phone number for the Danby Federated Church was reported incorrectly on Page 8A Thursday. The number for the church is (607) 272-1687.

The Journal attempts to correct errors in its news columns. To report a need for a correction or clarification, call 274-9261 weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

COMMONS FOLK

GOOD TO SEE A FAMILIAR FACE

Meet the cop keeping you safe on the Commons

NICK REYNOLDS

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City blocks change and faces move along, but in a cityscape, the peacemakers tend to stay the same. Gotham has Batman and Metropolis has Superman. For the last five years, regulars to the Ithaca Commons have had their face of justice in one man as well — Ithaca Police Officer Alex Pape.

You may have seen him walking down the center of the Commons, calling people by their first names, stopping people zipping by on their bicycles (not allowed in the Commons) or giving directions to a lost tourist. If you see him on his cellphone, it's likely business; just about every small business owner across three city blocks has his personal cell phone number.

Pape, an Ithaca resident since age 7, has been a constant presence on the Commons for several years now, one of two officers patrolling on foot. He is on from 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. The other officer, David Amaro, takes over in the afternoon and works until 11 p.m.

A veteran of IPD of nearly nine years, Pape patrolled the beat in the days when officers rotated the trek on the Commons, switching out every four months. He reluctantly decided to give it a go in his fourth year on the force and never left.

"The only thing that put me off and made me think I didn't want to do it was being on the Commons constantly, that if I got set up in the position I wouldn't enjoy being in the same spot 40 hours a week," Pape said.

From a young age, Pape said he knew he wanted to do only one thing in his life — help people. Though becoming a cop seems a natural conclusion, the journey to that point was more difficult than the decision itself. Pape accepted a football scholarship to UMass-Amherst (then a Division I FCS program) and enrolled in the business program, only to leave for Miami, Florida-based Florida International University, also in business.

Several years later, he was at Tompkins Cortland Community College, majoring in nursing.

"My parents didn't want me to be a police officer," Pape said. "They were concerned for my safety, didn't want me to get hurt and all. I enjoyed nursing school, but when I started doing clinical, I started to realize I didn't like being inside. I wanted to help the community outside the confines of the nursing home or hospital. I almost finished nursing school, but decided to pursue what I really wanted to do, law enforcement."

A decade ago, he got his shot, taking a job in Williamsburg, Virginia. A year-and-a-half later, he was back in Ithaca and on the Commons, which eventually became somewhat like a home-within-a-home. Walking down the street, it's not uncommon for him to call someone out for smoking a cigarette, using their first name. Smoking is not allowed on the Commons.

"It's good for the downtown businesses and residents to have that familiar face," Pape said. "It takes a while for an officer to build a rapport with downtown residents and businesses. Sometimes, I see the same tourists a lot too."



NICK REYNOLDS / STAFF PHOTO

Ithaca Police Officer Alex Pape, who has been working the Commons beat for about five years, talks with Jaquon Washington of Ithaca.

About this series

The Ithaca Journal is highlighting people who work, live and play on the Commons. If you'd like to suggest someone for this feature, please email staff writer Nick Reynolds, nreynolds@ithacajournal.com.

For a long time the Commons beat was something officers had to apply for, and after four months their time would be up. Before then, officers would rotate and someone new would be on the Commons each day. As Pape kept applying for the position, he pressed the chief's office to make it a permanent beat. That didn't happen, the term only being extended to a year, but Pape has reapplied for and received the assignment each year.

He says he enjoys it not just for his own preferences, but how it plays into the department's policy of community policing, being visible in the community and forming a relationship with the public they serve.

"We want to be getting out of our cars and going into communities to talk to people, trying to be more visible and approachable," Pape said. "Over the years as our numbers have diminished a little bit, that may be difficult. On a busy day you're going from call to call where you don't have time to stop for a bit and chat with residents because you're in the car chasing calls."

That's not to say the job is all outreach. Pape still has to deal with crime on the Commons, many incidents falling into the "quality of life" category. Disorderly conduct and noise complaints are the crimes he sees the most as well as some verbal or physical disputes. Shoplifting and petit larceny as well as

drug use are concerns Pape watches for as well, saying, in the center of a city, you tend to "get a taste of everything."

The beat does have its challenges. Though listed as a patrol area of six blocks, Pape often covers more than double that, which carries with it its own difficulties, especially in how quickly he can respond.

"I can't be everywhere at once," Pape said. "The Commons beat itself covers Seneca Street, Green Street and Cayuga Street — six city blocks — but over the years, it's been unofficially pushed out to 14 city blocks, including Dewitt Park, all on foot. We have other officers in the area, for times when there's an incident at the library and I'm at the park, but if we had the resources to put more people working on foot in the Commons, we would be able to diffuse incidents before they happened."

He noted the improvements to the Commons — highly visible, out in the open cameras to investigate incidents and an open landscape — can help dissuade crime. The biggest factor in improving life downtown, at least from a police perspective, is getting to know the people they serve.

"You have to be open-minded and think outside of the box," Pape said. "You have to have understanding and patience. I have certain expectations of the regulars I talk to, and I'll give them just as much respect, if not more, than I expect from them. Over the years, I've built a rapport with the public where I feel they know what to expect from me and what I expect from them. It doesn't happen overnight and it definitely doesn't happen in four months."

Follow Nick Reynolds on Twitter @IJCityWatch.

109-mph speeding stop yields pot bust

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Soloumane Magane

A Cortland man was charged with criminal possession of marijuana and reckless driving after being pulled over by New York State Police for driving more than 44 mph over the speed limit.

Soloumane Magane, 23, was charged with misdemeanors of criminal possession of marijuana, reckless driving and several other traffic violations after being pulled over on Interstate 81 north in the Town of Cortland at 4:15 a.m. Monday.

According to state police, he

was driving at 109 mph in his 2014 BMW. Police said they detected the smell of marijuana after approaching the vehicle and, after a search, discovered 30 grams of pot in the car.

Magane was arraigned in the Town of Cortland Court and in lieu of \$100 cash bail or \$250 property bond remanded to the Cortland County Jail.

Cayuga Landscape
Ithaca, NY

Garden Center Hours:
M-F 8am-6pm, Sat. 9am-5pm,
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