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News Release

Arkansas City man arrested on suspicion of DUI, battery of LEO

Rommel also accused of obstructing apprehension, abuse of toxic vapors

ARKANSAS CITY, Kan. (February 17, 2021) — The Arkansas City Police Department arrested an Arkansas City man Tuesday afternoon after he allegedly resisted arrest while under the influence.

Gary James Wayne Rommel, 35, was arrested on suspicion of one misdemeanor count each of abuse of toxic vapors, driving under the influence of a combination of drugs (first offense), battery of a law enforcement officer and interference with law enforcement by obstructing apprehension.

Rommel was transported to and booked into the Cowley County Jail in lieu of \$6,000 bond through Cowley County District Court in Arkansas City. He remained in custody at the time of this release.

Officers were dispatched about 12:55 p.m. Tuesday to the 800 block of South Third Street for a report of a man asleep at the steering wheel of a vehicle that was stopped in the middle of the street.

The man awoke and drove away prior to their arrival, but they contacted the reporting party, who had taken photographs of the vehicle and the suspect asleep behind its wheel.

He also had watched as the vehicle traveled south to Van Buren Avenue, turning westbound. An Arkansas City police officer traveled that same route and located the suspect's vehicle in the 600 block of West Van Buren Avenue, stopped in the oncoming lane with one of its front wheels in the south ditch.

The officer contacted the driver, later identified as Rommel, who was slumped over the center console with the locked vehicle in gear, but not running. Rommel was holding an aerosol can containing a substance that is commonly abused as an inhalant. As he began to wake, he attempted to place the opening of the can in his mouth as the officer made his presence known and ordered him to stop.

Several requests were made to stop and the aerosol can was taken away from Rommel. An odor of alcohol also was present. He became irate and refused commands from police to sit back down.

He continued to refuse to comply and began to fight an officer, eventually kicking the officer.

For immediate release

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Additional officers arrived shortly after and Rommel was taken into custody without further incident.

Due to his apparent inhalation of the aerosol can's contents, the Arkansas City Fire-EMS Department was dispatched to evaluate Rommel. After being checked out, he was transported directly to the Cowley County Jail after he again became noncompliant while in the back of a patrol vehicle.

Due to the area in which the vehicle was left and how it was parked, it was impounded by a local wrecker service.

A defendant's guilt or innocence is to be determined by a court of law.

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