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Two-county tire scheme lead to arrest

(KAIR)--New details come to light regarding the case of thousands of dollars worth of stolen custom-order wheels and tires that sent a Brown County resident to jail.

19-year-old Anthony Lay, of Willis, is accused of repeatedly burglarizing Armstrong Tires, located in rural Muscotah.

Atchison County Sheriff Jack Laurie told MSC News Lay used a fake name to place his orders, but then failed to pick them up. "He went in and ordered the tires under a different name. [The business then] notified him that the tires were in, but he never came and picked them up. He came in the middle of the night and took them, committed a burglary. Being that there's multiple people in the shop who actually do the sales they weren't sure if they sold them to somebody else, or what the case may be, so they ordered another set for the customer."

It's alleged that Lay broke into the business at least six times since early December.

Laurie said it was a neighbor of the business, in the early morning hours of January 5, who heard a loud vehicle, saw it parked near the business, and was able to provide a description.

Meanwhile, Brown County authorities had received tips about what is alleged to have been Lay's illegal operation selling the stolen goods, and that led to a joint investigation between the two law enforcement agencies.

Brown County Sheriff John Merchant told MSC News credit is owed to members of the public for offering additional information about the case. "You will never know how much we appreciate our public here in Brown County, our citizens are one of our biggest assets," Merchant said. "On this particular case, I'd been notified that there was just something not quite right about some of this stuff, this individual selling these items, put us in the direction of even Facebook, and things like that."

Merchant said it was through those tips that the joint investigation led to Lay's arrest. "We were able to identify that this individual had potentially taken items from another county, he was selling them in our county. When we got that information and compiled it, I immediately got a hold of Detective Larry Myer [of the Atchison County Sheriff's Office] and asked him to come up here because I told him that we had a pretty good idea who his little burglar was down there. We put all the pieces together, and collected a lot of stolen property here in Brown

County."

Laurie told MSC News Lay's thefts amounted to more than $8,000.

Lay faces Brown County charges for 3 counts of misdemeanor possession of stolen property,1 count of felony possession of stolen property, and felony obstruction.

Merchant said additional Brown County charges are possible.

In Atchison County, Lay is charged with 6 counts of burglary and 6 counts of theft.

He remains in the Atchison County Jail, held on a $15,000 bond.

Editor's note: Below is the original report from MSC News regarding the alleged crimes.

(KAIR)--A Willis man is facing charges in connection with what Atchison County Jack Laurie says was the theft of thousands of dollars worth of custom-order wheels and tires from a rural Muscotah business. "Probably close to $8,000 in tires and wheels had been stolen over the last month," Laurie told MSC News. "The first time they noticed some tires missing was around December 8 where they knew they had received a shipment in but then when they went to look for them they couldn't find them."

Arrested Monday in connection with the crime was 19-year-old Anthony Lay.

Laurie says Lay used a fake name to place orders with Armstrong Tires in order to break-in after hours and steal the items. "He went in and ordered the tires under a different name. [The business then] notified him that the tires were in, but he never came and picked them up. He came in the middle of the night and took them, committed a burglary. Being that there's multiple people in the shop who actually do the sales they weren't sure if they sold them to somebody else, or what the case may be, so they ordered another set for the customer."

It's alleged that Lay entered the business at least six times, since early December, as part of his plan.

Laurie says it was around 4:00 Saturday morning that an alert neighbor of the business became suspicious about activity in that location, and was able to gain information pertaining to a suspect vehicle. "A neighbor hears a vehicle, a loud truck, notices the truck near Armstrong Tires, gets in his vehicle, approaches the truck, and then that truck takes off. He tries to follow them and get a tag number,

but he wasn’t able to get close enough, but he did call 911 and we responded, and we were not able to find the vehicle at the time.”

Laurie says it was the vehicle description that ultimately led to the arrest of Lay in Hiawatha. “Detectives went to the Hiawatha area because the description of the vehicle that the neighbor had given matched the description of a vehicle that we had pursued prior to this incident. One of the deputies had gotten into a pursuit with that vehicle about a month ago.”

Further investigation, with the assistance of the Brown County Sheriff's Office, led to Lay's arrest on charges of burglary and theft.

Following his arrest, Lay was booked into the Atchison County Jail, held on a $15,000 bond.

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