

Scottsburg suspect arrested in recent parked car break-ins, thefts

Written by Marty Randall

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A suspect has been arrested and charged in several recent vehicle break-ins and thefts of personal property.

Taking a cell phone from a car parked at Wal-Mart on October 12 was apparently the undoing of suspect Patrick E. Bullington, 27. Bullington lives within 3/4ths of a mile of the store in Scottsburg.

On that Thursday, a woman and her daughter who had finished their shopping at Wal-Mart were walking back to their car when they noticed the driver's door ajar. Then, the woman said, a man stepped out of her car and threw down a cigarette. She began yelling at him. Her response apparently startled the man, who ran several vehicles down the aisle, jumped in a vehicle and began driving through the parking lot.

By that time, the woman's daughter noticed her cell phone was missing. The two got in their car and began chasing the man while calling 9-1-1 to report a theft in process. The dispatch sent Scottsburg Patrolmen Troy Ford and Trevis Burr to the scene. They found the theft victims with the man, who had stopped near the Goodwill store and handed the phone back to them.

Identified as Bullington, the man reportedly admitted the theft. He was placed in custody. In the vehicle that Bullington was driving, officers said they found two baggies of brown powder, which Ptl. Ford identified as heroin. What was even more interesting was the alleged discovery of several hotel cards and debit and credit cards in other people's names. Following up the officers' work in the case, Lt./Detective Mike Nichols began calling the people and telling them their cards had been recovered. One woman said her car had been parked at a nearby motel when items were taken, including a laptop and jacket. Another victim said items had been taken from her car while she was working at Cracker Barrel. A man who was contacted was not aware of the theft of his cards, Det. Nichols related in the probable cause affidavit. Bullington faces a Level 6 felony of possession of a narcotic drug, Level 6 felony maintaining a common nuisance, four counts of misdemeanor theft and one count of misdemeanor unauthorized entry of a motor vehicle. Bullington's initial court hearing was conducted Tuesday, October 17. A preliminary plea of not guilty was entered for him after his attorney, Kerry Thompson, waived the reading of his rights. He was assigned an initial trial date of January 22.

Bail was set at \$25,000 by corporate surety bond or \$2,500 cash. A cash bond was filed for

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Bullington the same day, and he was released with the condition that he stay away from Wal-Mart property.