

Division Information | Administrative | TOPS Messages

Superintendent's Trooper on Patrol Message 2007

From:	Superintendent Wayne E. Bennett	Issued: 01-19-07
Attn:	All New York State Police Employees	Troop(s): E & G

This week's message takes us to Troops E and G.

Troop E

On Tuesday, January 9, 2007, SP Auburn Communications Specialist **Teresa M. Walawender** received a phone call from an associate of the J. C. Penney store in the Fingerlakes Mall, regarding a larceny of clothing. The associate advised CommSpec Walawender that two males had stolen a large amount of clothing from the store, and she provided a description of the suspects' vehicle and direction of travel after leaving the parking lot. Communications Specialist Walawender dispatched **Trooper Thaddeus P. Wiggins** to the scene to obtain additional information. She then issued a BOLO to all personnel in the area regarding the larceny and the information on the suspects. As Trooper Wiggins was gathering additional information on the larceny, **Trooper Frank E. Schmitter**, CVEU, was traveling on State Route 318 in the town of Tyre, Seneca County, when he observed a vehicle matching the description of the one driven by the larceny suspects. Trooper Schmitter attempted to initiate a traffic stop, but the vehicle failed to comply. Trooper Schmitter continued to pursue the vehicle and relayed all information to the SP Auburn desk. Communications Specialist Walawender advised the on-duty sergeants, investigator, and field personnel of the pursuit. **Trooper Steven M. Kelley** and **Probationary Trooper Erin M. Barrett** heard the radio traffic and responded to assist Trooper Schmitter in the pursuit. The suspect vehicle lost control on a curve and became stuck in a muddy field. Both occupants fled the scene on foot and were apprehended by Troopers Schmitter, Kelley, and Barrett after a short foot chase. Both suspects were charged with Grand Larceny 3rd and numerous Vehicle and Traffic charges. They had stolen more than \$5,800 worth of clothing from the J. C. Penney store.

After being arraigned in Aurelius Town Court, the suspects were remanded to the Cayuga County Jail. They are scheduled to appear in Tyre Town Court later in January on charges of Unlawful Fleeing a Police Officer.

The diligent efforts of a Communications Specialist, the quick relay of detailed information, and the cooperative effort of multiple troopers led to the timely arrest and retrieval of the property.

High-speed chase leads to two arrests, troopers say

Men fled after stealing clothes from store at mall, state police report.

By John Stith
Staff writer

A brief, high-speed chase Tuesday in Seneca County ended with the arrests of two Rochester men suspected of stealing \$5,854 worth of clothes from the J.C. Penney store at the Fingerlakes Mall in Aurelius.

State police Investigator Joel Pinker said Frederick Welch, 47, of 147 Penhurst St., and Michael Gissendanner, 50, of 64 Ward St., were charged with third-degree grand larceny.

Welch, who Pinker said was the driver of the getaway car,

was also charged with third-degree unlawful fleeing a police officer under the recently enacted Craig Todeschini law.

Pinker said that shortly before 2:30 p.m. Tuesday, a J.C. Penney clerk told troopers she saw two men stuff clothes in a bag and leave the store.

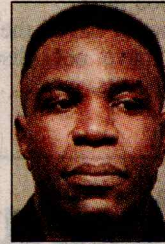
The clerk followed the men out, gave state police a description of the car and a partial license plate number, and told troopers the vehicle headed west on Routes 5 & 20, officials said.

"She did a great job," Pinker said. "She went outside, saw them get in the vehicle, got a partial plate and saw which direction they were headed and relayed that information to us."

Troopers spotted the car — a



Welch



Gissendanner

gray Ford Crown Victoria — on Route 318, about 10 miles west of the mall. When they tried to stop the vehicle, it fled, turning onto Middle Black Brook Road, they said.

Pinker said the vehicle led state police on a chase at speeds as high as 100 mph. The vehicle went off the road on a curve. The two men ran away and were cap-

tured a short time later, trooper said.

"The troopers over there did a great job," Pinker said.

Welch was on parole from state prison for fourth-degree grand larceny, Pinker said, and Gissendanner was on probation out of Rochester City Court.

Welch and Gissendanner were arraigned on the grand larceny charges in Aurelius Town Court and were being held Wednesday at the Cayuga County jail. Third-degree grand larceny is a felony punishable by up to seven years in prison.

Welch is to appear Jan. 23 in Tyre Town Court on the charge of unlawful fleeing a police officer.

To reach John Stith, e-mail him at jstith@syracuse.com or call 253-7316.