



LUNA COUNTY SHERIFF

2 arrested in cell tower theft

Damage at the site included stripped copper wiring, diesel engine and electrical boxes tampered with during the early morning burglary

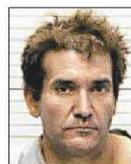
By Elena Ruiz
er Ruiz@demingheadlight.com
@LenaHeadlight on Twitter

Luna County Sheriff's deputies foiled an early-morning burglary on Monday after responding to a dispatch call of a possible burglary in progress.

Stephen Matteson, 45, of Las Cruces, and Norman Means, 53, of Silver City, are both in custody at the Luna County Detention Center. Both men face charges of burglary, possession of burglary tools and conspiracy, all fourth-degree felonies, and criminal trespass, a misdemeanor charge.

"They did a great job," said Undersheriff Arturo Baeza of the Luna County Sheriff's Office apprehension. "The quick response of the deputies made the arrests possible."

According to the sheriff's report, at 9:43 a.m., a concerned citizen called central dispatch to re-



Matteson



Means

port a possible burglary in progress located in the area of Gap Road and Rivera Road SE, near

the Florida Mountains. Luna County Detective David Holguin arrived at a communications tower with a commercial building on the property to find Matteson and Means burglarizing the building.

A lock to the tower fence was cut to gain access.

The two men were allegedly disassembling a large diesel motor and tampered with electrical boxes

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and other objects inside the building, officials said. Copper wire was also observed to be have been stripped and taken.

LCSO Deputy Joshua Elford and Detective Saenz both arrived on scene to assist Holguin. Elford cleared the empty building and con-

ducted an inventory search.

According to the report, Elford located a small metal smoking pipe inside a 2003 silver in color, GMC pickup the men had on the property. Means allegedly admitted to owning the pipe with what appeared to have partially burned marijuana.

A further search produced multiple motor parts, copper wire, tools consistent with equipment inside the building, were located in

the bed of the truck.

Matteson and Means were both placed under arrest and transported to the detention center.

Detective Holguin said the investigation is still ongoing.

If you have any information on this, or any crime, call Crime Stoppers at 546-7800. Callers can remain anonymous.

Elena Ruiz may be reached at 575-546-2611, ext. 2608.