

Mental health caused nearly nude woman in local viral video to be taken into protective custody this morning

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
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ALTON - A couple going to get breakfast from the Alton McDonalds on Broadway was surprised when they saw a nearly naked woman, who they believed was under the influence of drugs.

The video, which has more than 150 shares as of 12:19 p.m. Monday, has been viewed by more than 5,000 people at the time of writing. It shows a woman wearing some sort of towel or shoulder cover, but otherwise completely nude, standing in the middle of Central Avenue near Fast Eddie's Fried Chicken. Stephanie Wills, who took the video, said she uploaded it to Facebook so the woman's family could help her.

In the video, Wills and her boyfriend asked the woman if she was OK and if she needed emergency help. The woman did not respond or even change the countenance of her face.

"I was starving," Wills said via Facebook Messenger. "My boyfriend, Keith, and I went to McDonald's on Broadway, and turned right at the corner of Ridge, and she was in front of Midtown. I'm a CNA, so I told him to turn around. So, we hit Union, and she was in the middle between Midtown and Fast Eddie's."

In the video, Wills can be heard trying to talk to the woman before delivering her opinion about drug usage. She said she believed the woman had taken drugs before being found wandering nearly naked in the street.

Wills said she did not contact police regarding the matter, hoping instead the woman's family would take care of her.

As of now, the woman remains unidentified. A copy of the video was sent to Alton Police Chief Jason Simmons for comment. He said drugs were not to blame for the woman's state of mind, instead, he said it had to do with her mental health and a decline in state funding for such vulnerable people.

"I looked at the video," Simmons said. "We got a couple of 911 calls, and we took her into protective custody. Did the same thing on July 6, and the Fire Department took her for mental evaluation."

Because of lack of funding around the area, police departments around the nation, and especially in this state, are dealing with mental health issues, Simmons said.

"I would encourage people to call congressmen and senators to get funding for these issues," he said.

Officers in Alton are all trained to handle these issues, Simmons assured, adding they were becoming more and more common in Illinois.

"This is a situation in which mental health needs to be funded in this area," he said.

"More and more, people are sent in for evaluations, and then sent home because of a lack of funding."