

Sheriff's Office seeking information on Calhoun car break-ins

by Cory Davenport, Contributing Writer
October 2 2018 1:01 PM



HARDIN – Three cars were burglarized during last Friday night's football game between Calhoun High School and West Central High School.

Calhoun County Sheriff's Office Chief Deputy Kyle Jacobs said as many as three cars were burglarized at the game, which were parked in a row on the driveway from Route 100 to the high school. The incident happened around 9 p.m., during the third quarter of

the football game. Purses and other items, including a cellphone, were taken from the vehicles after windows were broken to gain entry. Jacobs said each vehicle was locked at the time of the burglary.

Jacobs said he was contacted by the school superintendent during the game. He himself was heading toward the game at the time of the call, having been delayed from arriving at the game by a previous call. He said he missed the incident by 10-15 minutes.

“It was one of those weird things of timing,” he said. “I was out on another call, but I usually try to get there by kickoff. It was bad timing that I wasn't pulling up in time to catch them.”

Security cameras around the school grounds were not able to capture clear video evidence of the suspects due to a tree obstructing its view. Jacobs said his office is reviewing the video frame-by-frame to see if they can get a clear description of the suspect(s) and their vehicle. A witness at the scene reported seeing a group of three people in the lot around the time of the burglary, but Jacobs said they were unrelated to the crime.

A cellphone taken from the scene was tracked via an application utilizing GPS data, and it pinged a location several miles from the scene in Northwest Calhoun County. Upon further investigation, however, Jacobs said the cellphone was found discarded in a ditch.

“They are either smart criminals who saw the phone and realized it could be used to track them, or they just happened to see that they accidentally took it and threw it out,” he said. “I'm thinking they were smart criminals.”

The location of that phone in the ditch made Jacobs think the suspect(s) were traveling through the area and may not have been at the game at all.

Stolen credit and debit cards from the scene are also being tracked to see if they had been used between Friday night and now. Jacobs also said the Calhoun County Sheriff's Office is seeking assistance from the Illinois State Police (ISP) Crime Labs to get finger print analysis from a piece of property recovered from the scene.

Jacobs said the break-ins are the second such instance in Calhoun County in 2018. He said in the spring a similar incident occurred during a softball game at the high school, but said those cars were unlocked and no windows were broken. No suspects have been identified or charged from that incident.

Another similar incident also occurred in Jerseyville in recent weeks. Jacobs said the Calhoun County Sheriff's Office is working with the Jerseyville Police Department to

see if there are any similarities between the two incidences, and perhaps even the same suspect(s).

In Jacobs's opinion, whoever broke into those cars is a professional criminal. He said that person or persons will be charged with felony crimes of breaking into motor vehicles.

Anyone with any information on this case is asked to call the Calhoun County Sheriff's Office at (618) 576-2417. Jacobs said people should always remember to keep their vehicles locked and keep any valuable items out of view from the outside of the cars. He said such things should not have to be said in a proper and civilized society, but due to recent incidences, it may be necessary for the safety of personal property.

Jacobs said the sheriff's office will also work to place more officers on the grounds of football games instead of only inside of them.