

MIDDLETOWN

A morning of mayhem for police

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For a few moments early Thursday morning, the scene was bedlam verging on anarchy in a large swath of Middletown.

A motorist ignored police commands and drove backward down the wrong side Durham Road, smashed through a fence, a yard, numerous bushes, a tree, a doghouse, a fish pond and a canoe, police said.

Before that, he allegedly was in a fight with two men outside the Wawa on Trenton Road around 1:20 a.m. Those two men were no angels either, police said. One of them allegedly tried to punch and spit on ambulance crew members and assault two cops after the fight. The other man was charged with DUI.

And that's not to mention the woman who allegedly assaulted a cop outside the Wawa during the mayhem.

The man who drove into the canoe is Matthew Lawley, 30, of Harleysville, court records stated.

He was charged with simple assault, having a prohibited offensive weapon, fleeing or attempting to elude police and driving under the influence of alcohol and or a controlled substance. He was sent to Bucks County prison by District Judge John Kelly Jr. in lieu of \$50,000 bail.

The men who allegedly fought with Lawley were Mark Tosti, 21, of Timber Lane in Langhorne, and John Yates, 23, of Cleveland Street in Bristol. Tosti is charged with simple assault for trying to attack the paramedics and cops, resisting arrest and disorderly conduct. Yates is charged with DUI, and simple assault for allegedly fighting with Lawley.

Skyler Pawline, 19, of Indian Creek Drive, Bristol Township, was charged with aggravated assault, resisting arrest and simple assault after she pushed a Middletown cop outside the Wawa. It's unclear why she did that and what connection, if any, she had to the other men, according to court records.

The string of incidents began when motorists called 911 to report a fight near the Wawa on Trenton Road near Durham Road.

Officer Matthew J. Kroiss saw a blue GMC Suburban driven by Lawley, which was operating in reverse and speeding on Durham Road. He was traveling north in the southbound lane, police said.

At this point, Officers Mary Alice Felt and Derek Leonhauser ordered Lawley to stop. He would not, police said. He continued to speed in reverse on Durham Road. Police found Lawley in the side yard of 504 Durham Road, about a half mile from where he was told to stop, police said.

Lawley lost control of his vehicle on Durham Road and drove across the front yard of 510 Claymont Ave. His Suburban took out a nine-foot section of a nearly six-foot-tall fence. Lawley continued to drive through the rear and side yard, causing extensive damage. Then he drove through the dog house, bushes, trees, fish pond and canoe, police said.

When police finally confronted Lawley, they smelled alcohol on his breath, court records stated.

Police found a pair of brass knuckles, a prohibited offensive weapon, on the floor behind the driver's seat, they said. Lawley allegedly told police he did not know he was not allowed to have them.

Sometime before or after their dealings with Lawley, police were confronted with the alleged shenanigans at Wawa with Yates, Tosti and Pawline, police said.

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