



Jefferson City Post-Tribune

WEDNESDAY'S WEATHER: Partly sunny, but a chance of showers late



Anti-meth crusader

page 12

JEFFERSON CITY, MISSOURI

TUESDAY, MAY 17, 2005

50 CENTS

'Assault' complaint against 3 JCPD officers

By **BOB WATSON**
News Tribune

Three police officers' response outside their jurisdiction to a Sunday night call from one officer's wife, about possible trouble in their neighborhood, now is the subject of an internal Jefferson City Police Department investigation.

The wife had called her husband, concerned about a vehicle driving past their home "at a slow speed" and playing music loudly.

On May 8, a Cole County man told Cole County Sheriff's deputies he was assaulted by "two Jefferson City Police uniformed officers" and a third officer who was not in

Out-of-jurisdiction actions under investigation

uniform, but is the complaining man's neighbor.

The man also told deputies the police officers didn't identify themselves properly and one of them gave a false name.

"We initiated the investigation immediately, just because we had heard that this individual was upset about it," Police Chief Roger Schroeder said Tuesday morning. "I'm keeping an open mind."

Both men live in the central part of Cole County, several miles past Jefferson City's

limits.

The man said the assault occurred after one of the uniformed officers demanded the man come out his trailer door and speak to him.

Once outside, the man said, the officer "grabbed him by his wrist," cursed at him and told him, "You're not allowed to go past your driveway."

The man said one of the uniformed officers and the officer who is his neighbor both were "poking him in the chest," and that he

could not get back into his home "without pushing one of them."

The man's attorney, James D. (Doug) Barding of Jefferson City, said Monday: "It's my view that (when) an officer comes to your house and lays hands on you ... were it anyone else, they would be charged with assault."

Cole County Prosecutor Bill Tackett said Monday: "The case is still under investigation. There is not enough information to make that decision" about filing, or not filing, any charges.

The man also told deputies the officer
See POLICE, page 5

★ Police

From page one

who is his neighbor “began yelling at him about staying away from his family and the lug nuts that were loosened on the truck.”

Police say one of their officers had experienced a situation where lug nuts — which hold a wheel onto the axle — had been loosened on his truck and that he nearly had an accident.

The Cole County man denies knowing anything about that, and told Chief Sheriff’s Deputy John Wheeler last Wednesday he wanted to press charges in the case.

Barding said he’s considering a federal civil rights lawsuit against the department and the officers.

“We’ll expect to be making a decision (about filing a lawsuit) in a matter of a week or so,” Barding said. “My client’s very upset — he and his girlfriend — and they feel that they have been the victim of a rogue element within the Jefferson City Police Department.”

Schroeder said he’s not surprised that any attorney would “advocate for his clients, and it’s not unusual to make broad statements.”

Schroeder said he’ll see where his department’s investigation leads.

“That’s why I want to talk with this person,” he said. “If he will come in and talk to us, we will assess what he says with what the officers say. And we will look at any kind of tangible ... evidence, and we’ll go from there. ...

“We’re obviously hampered by hearing only one half” of the information needed to complete the internal investigation.

However, he said, he’s not concerned that police officers were responding to a possible emergency outside the city limits.

State law allows officers to respond to an “emergency situation” outside their normal jurisdiction, where the “law enforcement officer has a reasonable belief that a crime is about to be committed, is being committed, or has been committed involving injury or threat of injury to any person, property, or governmental interest and such officer’s response is reasonably necessary to prevent or end such emergency.”

bwatson@newstribune.com