

Village of Freedom Police Department

On Friday January 4, 2019 I, Officer Jake Peralta, was on active duty patrol for the Village of Freedom police department. I observed a suspicious vehicle in the area of Gideon Way. The vehicle was a newer model Mercedes but was driving in a low-income neighborhood. I positioned my squad car behind the vehicle to run the license plates.

I contacted dispatch with the license plate information. The license plates returned valid with a registration to a white male, Paul Samaritan. The driver of the vehicle appeared to be a hispanic female and the front passenger appeared to be a black female. It appeared there was a child in the backseat. I did not observe a white male in the vehicle. When I positioned myself behind the vehicle, I could see that part of the license plate was covered by a license plate frame that said "Go Freedom Fighters."

Based on the license plate obstruction and the suspicious occupants, I conducted a traffic stop of the vehicle on Gideon Way in the Village of Freedom, Liberty County Wisconsin. I identified the driver by a Wisconsin driver's license as SOFIA D. HERNANDEZ. Dispatch confirmed that Ms. Hernandez's driver's license was suspended for unpaid parking tickets. Ms. Hernandez did not know her license was suspended. The passenger did not have a driver's license or Wisconsin identification. The passenger verbally identified herself as RAMONA S. DENG. Ms. Deng provided identifying documentation confirming her refugee status. I observed a young child in the backseat of the vehicle in a front-facing car seat. Ms. Deng advised that it was her child, AVA, age 1. I advised that the child should be in a rear-facing car seat. The occupants said they had permission to use the car.

I observed that the occupants of the vehicle were nervous and fidgeting. When I was talking with the occupants of the vehicle, I could detect a faint odor of burnt marijuana. I also observed in plain view a pill bottle on the rear floorboard, near the child car seat. I advised the occupants that I would be searching the vehicle and asked them to exit.

I performed a search of the vehicle. I inspected the pill bottle on the rear floorboard. The bottle was prescribed to Paul Samaritan for Oxycodone. There were no pills in the bottle. I searched a purse in the rear seat and found diapers and identifying documents for Ms. Deng in the purse. Inside the purse, I located a pipe with burnt leafy

material. The pipe had an odor of burnt marijuana. Based on my training and experience, the pipe appeared to be used to smoke or inhale marijuana. I seized the pipe and placed it in an evidence bag.

Inside of the glove box directly in front of the passenger seat, I located a plastic baggie that was tied in a knot. Inside of the baggie, I observed a tan colored powdery substance with small chunks consistent in color with the powder. I believed the powder was some sort of illicit narcotic, potentially heroin. I weighed the bag and contents using a digital scale in my squad car. The total weight of the bag with contents was 0.9 grams.

I obtained a Nark II Meckes Reagent test from my squad car. I opened the bag and removed a small portion of the powder from the bag. A field test of the powder resulted in a positive indication for Heroin, a scheduled narcotic.

Because the marijuana pipe was in Ms. Deng's purse and the baggie was in the glove compartment directly in front of her, I placed her under arrest. I searched Ms. Deng incident to arrest and did not find anything of evidentiary value. I contacted CPS to pick up Ava because she was under CHIPS order.

I transported Ms. Deng to the Liberty County jail and took her to the booking room. I asked her how often she used the car. Ms. Deng said that she uses the car regularly and finds a friend to drive her. I asked Ms. Deng if she regularly keeps her possessions in the vehicle. Ms. Deng said she usually did not keep things in the vehicle, but she has been the last month when Mr. Samaritan was on vacation. Ms. Deng asked if I meant leaving the car seat in the vehicle. I said I meant leaving anything belonging to her in the vehicle. Ms. Deng asked if I was also referring to the drugs I found in the glove box.

I then read Ms. Deng her *Miranda* rights, which she waived. Ms. Deng admitted the drugs in the glove compartment were hers. I considered releasing Ms. Deng, but the jail advised me that the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement placed an ICE hold on Ms. Deng for the felony drug offense and she could not be released.

I sent the bag with tan powder chunks to the State Crime Lab for further testing. The Crime Lab later sent back their test results, with examinations of the powder chunks identifying the presence of Heroin. The marijuana pipe was not submitted to the crime lab based on Ms. Deng's admissions.