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Woman booked on 49 charges

SEBRING -- A woman who was wanted for 25 counts of illegally using a credit card was arrested Monday and ended up with a litany of new charges.

Deputy James Brimlow spotted 33-year-old Jessica Ann Manning's car -- in which she was reported to be living -- in the parking lot of the Avon Park Walmart at 11:38 p.m. Monday, March 6. Manning had an active warrant for 25 counts of identity theft from a person over 60 as well as charges of grand theft, theft of a credit card and illegal use of a credit card.



Manning

During a search of the area after her car was spotted, Manning was seen running through an orange grove behind the store. Deputy Melissa Lander cornered Manning, but when Deputy Brian Hernandez and Sgt. Barry Jones tried to take her into custody, she resisted and had to be taken to the ground. After being placed in Hernandez's patrol car, Manning told him that she had been living in a tent in the grove. Additional charges of resisting arrest and trespassing in a citrus grove were added to Manning's list of offenses.

Manning had two purses in her possession when she was arrested. Inside those, Det. Steven Ritenour found Manning's driver's license as well two syringes and a plastic pen tube that contained traces of methamphetamine.

Also in one of the purses was a credit card that was not in Manning's name. Follow-up by Ritenour revealed a card stolen from the same person had been used seven times in rapid succession on March 5 -- one successful charge (with a false signature) of \$204.49 at the Avon Park Walmart, five declined charges at Walmart for amounts between \$4.30 and \$708.63 and a declined \$1 charge at Murphy's Express nearby. Manning was charged with seven counts of identity theft, as well as grand theft, two counts of theft of a credit card, one count of fraud and one count of forgery.

Inside the tent, Ritenour located mail with Manning's name on it as well as two metal spoons with partially melted blue pills on them. The pills tested positive as opiates. That led to two charges of possession of a controlled substance as well as possession of drug paraphernalia.

It was also learned that Manning had leased a tablet and a laptop and had not made the payments. Multiple calls from the store had been made in an attempt to recover the items, but the phone calls -- and the items -- had not been returned. Manning was charged with two counts fraud/failure to return leased items valued at more than \$300.

After being booked into the jail, Manning was observed on video removing a plastic baggie from inside her body and ingesting a pill. She was charged with introducing contraband into the jail and tampering with evidence.

By the time her day was done, Manning was booked on 49 charges, 43 of them felonies:

- 32 counts of identity theft -- 25 of them against a person over 60, which is an enhanced charge.
- 3 counts of theft of a credit card (misdemeanor).
- 2 counts of grand theft.
- 2 counts of fraud.
- 2 counts of possession of a controlled substance.
- 2 counts of resisting arrest without violence (misdemeanor).
- Illegal use of a credit card.
- Forgery.
- Trespassing in a citrus grove.
- Possession of drug paraphernalia (misdemeanor).
- Smuggling contraband into the jail.
- Tampering with evidence.

Her bond was set at \$161,500.

Note: Not all arrests lead to a conviction. All suspects are innocent until proven guilty in court.