

Woman is accused of lying about rape

BY ROBIN ERB

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An Oregon woman who told police she'd been raped Christmas Day along I-280 by a man posing as a police officer was jailed yesterday on a charge that she fabricated the story.

"The real tragedy here is that when the next woman comes in here and was really raped, her story is going to go under the microscope even more," Detective Phil Kulakoski said.

Dianne Reed, 21, of Brown Road, was charged with falsifying a police report, a first-degree misdemeanor, when she arrived at the downtown Safety Building to amend her original rape report, Detective Kulakoski said.

A first-degree misdemeanor is punishable by up to six months in jail.

According to the original report, Ms. Reed said she was on her way home from a friend's West Toledo home about 1:40 a.m. Dec. 25 when she was stopped along the freeway near Front Street by an unmarked car with a flashing red beacon on its roof.

reporting person wasn't raped, but they seldom file charges against the alleged victim.

In this case, however, Detective Kulakoski said several investigators, lab technicians, and hospital staff members worked hours on the case because the victim insisted that her story was true.

Detective Kulakoski traveled to Waterville to interview a bridge tender to see whether he had noticed anything that night.

"There were long hours put in on this case," he said.

Additionally, when the woman gave a detailed description of her attacker, she said he was black, the detective noted. "There's this whole racial angle too," he said.

Police were skeptical about the woman's story early in the case, but they released the suspect's information to the news media in hopes of finding someone to identify the assailant, if he existed.

"Certainly, if this really had happened, we wanted to catch this guy," he said. "We didn't want to take any chances."

The man, who was dressed in black, ordered her to step from the car, she said. He pulled a knife and forced her into the rear seat of her car, where he raped her, she told police.

He then let her go, and she drove home, where she told her boyfriend about being attacked, she said.

The boyfriend called Oregon police, who contacted Toledo police. Ms. Reed went to a hospital for treatment.

But investigators said physical evidence, combined with statements from friends and others who were with Ms. Reed throughout the night, contradicted her story.

At least one man said he was with Ms. Reed at the friend's home until 4:30 or 4:45 a.m., Detective Kulakoski said. And neither medical reports nor a tedious search of her car's back seat by the department's forensic investigators showed any evidence that the woman had been attacked.

Police periodically dismiss rape cases after evidence proves the