



# **NEWS RELEASE**

## **RIVER FOREST POLICE DEPARTMENT**

**For Immediate Release**  
**December 16, 2024**

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### **Police arrest four people for multiple thefts of Pride flags**

**River Forest, IL** – On Saturday, December 14, 2024, at approximately 1:37AM, a River Forest Police Officer observed a vehicle parked in the 500 block of Thatcher Ave with its lights off. The officer followed the vehicle as it drove around with its lights off and radioed the information to other officers. The vehicle was stopped by police at Chicago Avenue and Jackson Avenue. The driver of the vehicle was a juvenile and did not have a valid driver's license. The driver was arrested for the traffic offense and officers began getting the three juvenile passengers out of the vehicle. Officers observed what appeared to be a firearm under some items on the rear floorboard. Officers investigated further and determined that the apparent firearm was an airsoft pistol. Another airsoft pistol was also recovered.

Officers recovered approximately fifteen Pride flags in the vehicle. The flags appeared to have been forcefully ripped off numerous homes. Officers were able to locate one victim in River Forest. The owner of the flag identified one of the Pride flags that had been affixed to the residence. The driver and passengers were arrested and all offenders refused to provide any statements. Officers contacted the Cook County State's Attorney Felony Review Unit, but the case could not be enhanced to a hate crime.

The adult passenger, 18, of the 1400 block of Harlem Avenue, River Forest, was charged with misdemeanor Theft and Contributing to the Delinquency of a Minor. The three juveniles were petitioned to Juvenile Court for Theft and Curfew and released to their parents. The juvenile driver was issued traffic citations.

Chief James O'Shea stated, "These hate-based incidents won't be tolerated in our community. The Village of River Forest continues to advocate for victims and witnesses with regard to these ugly and insensitive crimes."

Anyone that experienced a similar incident or has information or video related to the Thefts are encouraged to contact River Forest Police at (708) 366-7125.

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