CITY OF HARRISONBURG
POLICE
DEPARTMENT

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"Mother Duck" Found and Returned Thanks to Community Tips

Harrisonburg, Va. – The bronze "Mother Duck" statue stolen from outside the Explore More Discovery Museum in downtown Harrisonburg has been found thanks to community tips.

On June 30th, staff at the museum reported to the Harrisonburg Police Department (HPD) that the statue had been stolen between June 26th and June 30th. HPD detectives canvassed the area to identify businesses with security cameras and obtain any footage of the theft.

Thanks to security footage from surrounding businesses, HPD was able to narrow down the time of theft to the early morning hours of June 28th and obtain video of three suspects and the vehicle they were driving. Those photos were then posted to HPD social media accounts in hopes that someone may recognize them.

On July 29th, multiple tips were submitted through the anonymous Tip411 system, identifying Madeleine Helmick as the female in the photo and one of the males as Carter Fleming. Thanks to these tips, a search warrant was executed, and "Mother Duck" was recovered in a wooded area off Country Club Road.

Madeleine Helmick, 21, of Harrisonburg, has been charged with one count of Conspiracy to Commit a Felony.

Carter Fleming, 22, of Broadway, has been charged with one count of Grand Larceny and one count of Conspiracy to Commit a Felony.

Joel Biller, 24, of Broadway, has been charged with one count of Grand Larceny and one count of Conspiracy to Commit a Felony.

This case was no doubt solved with the help of anonymous tips submitted through Tip411, an anonymous tipline used to submit confidential information to HPD. Community members can submit non-emergency tips directly to HPD regarding current cases, public safety concerns, and criminal activity. To submit a tip, visit www.harrisonburgva.gov/tip-411 or download the "Harrisonburg PD" app in the App Store.

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