

Press Release

LAKE CITY
POLICE
DEPARTMENT



Chief of Police Gerald Butler

For Immediate Release
July 7, 2025

Greg Burnsed, Public Information Officer
Ph. (386) 247-1148

False report leads to arrest

On Sunday, July 6, 2025, at approximately 9:33 A.M., officers from the Lake City Police Department responded to the Gateway Laundromat, located at 1101 W US Highway 90, in reference to a reported robbery and abduction in progress.

Upon arrival, officers made contact with the reporting party, who claimed he was robbed at knife point by an unknown male who then abducted his girlfriend. Officers from both the Lake City Police Department and the Columbia County Sheriff's Office canvassed the area extensively, but no suspect or victim was located.

During the investigation, the reporting party changed key details of his account. Officers contacted the alleged victim by phone, who confirmed she was safe and had not seen the reporting party since July 4. Clay County deputies completed a well-being check and confirmed she was unharmed and staying in Keystone Heights.

Officers conducted interviews with laundromat employees and a witness nearby, none of whom observed any incident matching the reporting party's claims. Surveillance footage reviewed by management further corroborated that the reporting party was alone and no altercation had taken place.

Benjamin Raber was arrested and transported to the Columbia County Detention Facility without incident.

"The resources expended due to false claims take away from legitimate emergencies in our community," stated Chief of Police Gerald Butler. "We appreciate the swift response of our officers with assistance from the Columbia and Clay County Sheriff's Offices in resolving this situation quickly and safely."

Anyone with information regarding this or any other crime is encouraged to contact the Lake City Police Department at (386) 752-4343 or report information anonymously through the LCPD TIPS line at (386) 719-2068 or Crime Stoppers of Columbia County at (386) 754-7099.



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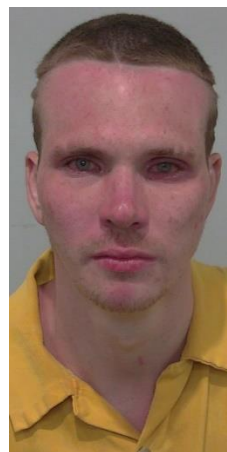
www.lcflapd.com

@LCFlaPD



Chief of Police Gerald Butler

Name: Raber, Benjamin Josiah
DOB: 02/06/1997
Sex/Race: Male/White
Hair/Eyes: Brown /Green
Charge(s): Homeless, Lake City, FL
Misuse of 911 Services
Providing False Information to Law Enforcement
Possession of a Controlled Substance without a Prescription



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