

By LARRY PHILLIPS

• Leader & Times

A man stole a car from the south side of Liberal and then tried outrunning law enforcement before being captured northwest of town. Theft of the auto happened early Tuesday, according to a statement released by Liberal Police Capt. Pat McClurg.

“On Tuesday, Sept. 03, at about 5:40 a.m., a citizen reported the theft of a white, 2000 Pontiac Grand Am from the 900 block of South Pennsylvania,” McClurg noted. “The vehicle had been left unlocked and running when it was stolen.”

Apparently, the thief didn’t leave the city and was later spotted by officers driving down Kansas Avenue, the report noted.

“At about 9:10 a.m., officers observed the stolen vehicle at 15th Street and Kansas Avenue traveling north,” McClurg said. “Officers attempted to stop the vehicle. The driver fled and a pursuit ensued.”

McClurg reported the chase was joined by the Kansas Highway Patrol and the Seward County Sheriff’s Department.

“The driver was apprehended at the 2500 block of Ridge Road where he was taken into custody without further incident,” he noted. “There were no other occupants in the vehicle.”

Police pursue, nab car thief

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Police scanner traffic noted pursuing officers said several times the thief had left the roadway and driven into the ditch but made it back onto the pavement. One officer said the car at one point was doing 60 mph on West Tucker Road.

“The suspect, a 31-year-old male, was taken to Southwest Medical Center by a police officer for the treatment of a non-life threatening injury,” McClurg added.

An affidavit will be filed with the Seward County Attorney’s office seeking charges of theft, conspiracy, fleeing and attempting to elude and driving while license suspended, according to McClurg.