

Thomas bomb threats

Sophomore faces felony charges

*School 'moving forward'
after last week's arrest*

By **MEREDITH SOMERS**

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Threatening notes written to two Thomas Worthington High School students have led to the arrest of a 16-year-old sophomore.

At noon Thursday, Nov. 15, several Worthington police officers arrested Andrew Crowe of Flora Villa Drive on charges of menacing by stalking and aggravated menacing.

"It was very low-key, and he was very cooperative," said Lt. Doug Francis of the Worthington Division of Police. "He was brought to headquarters for processing and he spoke to his mother."

Crowe was arrested after two weeks of investigation following the initial appearance of bomb threats in the lockers of two freshman girls.

According to a statement released by Worthington police, on Oct. 26 the girls received a handwritten note stating their lockers were going to be bombed, and the writer of the note would "get them and that they could not hide."

These threats came only days after a series of bomb threats and racially motivated threats were found written on bathroom walls and in handwritten notes.

Francis said the school has been working with police in their ongoing investigation to un-

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cover suspects.

Over the next week, continued written threats to the girls indicated their time was limited.

Crowe was discovered after an extensive handwriting analysis by teachers and a professional analyst and retired police officer.

Francis said Crowe had been a name suggested by teachers after the letters were submitted to school staff for review.

"We (asked), 'Whose handwriting does this look like?'" Francis said.

During a meeting with Crowe and his parents some time before the arrest, Francis said the boy denied any connection to the notes.

But a further look at his writing sample proved a match for all three threats.

Francis said because each student was named multiple times, there was a total of two

felony charges of menacing by stalking and six misdemeanor charges of aggravated menacing.

"The misdemeanors are in the first degree and carry a \$1,000 fine and/or six months in jail," Francis said.

The menacing by stalking charges are each a fourth-degree felony, which can lead to a \$15,000 fine or up to 18 months in jail.

Francis said to his knowledge, Crowe was taken to the juvenile detention center at the Franklin County Court of Domestic Relations, where he spent the night awaiting his hearing.

"The juvenile court's aim is to rehabilitate," Francis said, so the severity of his punishment is not yet known.

Motivation and relation between the suspect and victims has yet to be determined, Francis said, but he confirmed that "race is not a consideration."

As for the reaction of school officials, Principal Jim Gaskill said there wasn't one, but there was a feeling of relief to return to a normal schedule.

"We're just happy to be focusing on teaching and learning," Gaskill said.

Francis and Gaskill both said their respective sides would continue to investigate the remaining October threats.

"We take these kinds of threats very seriously, and we are very fortunate to have a strong relationship with the police department," Gaskill said. "We're moving forward ... and continue to ensure the safety of students and staff."

CHURCH EVENTS

Radiant Life Church

Radiant Life Church Worship Center, 7100 Post Road, will feature *The Gospel According to Scrooge* at 7 p.m. Dec. 8, 9, 14, 15 and 16.

Admission is free, however, reserved seats are available for \$5.

For tickets call 614-889-8364.