

Police cite two for trying to destroy downtown trees

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Port Washington police on Saturday cited two people for trying to destroy trees planted along Franklin Street in downtown.

A 25-year-old Port Washington man was cited for disorderly conduct at about 2:30 a.m. after an officer patrolling downtown saw him shaking a ginkgo tree outside Foxy's Tavern, then bending the top of the tree as if he wanted to snap it off, police said.

When the officer pulled up, the man let go of the tree and began to walk away, according to the police report. The officer stopped him, told him his actions were unacceptable and issued him a ticket.

The man claimed he was only leaning up against the tree, police said.

At about 10:30 p.m., a 30-year-old Pewaukee woman was also cited for disorderly conduct after an officer saw her attempting to climb a tree in the 200 block of Franklin Street, police said.

The woman was pulling on the tree, bending it over, and her feet rubbed some of the bark off, according to the police report.

When the officer issued the ticket, the woman became very angry and argued with him, police said.

The tickets carry a maximum fine of \$208.50, according to police.

The incidents occurred less than a week after two other downtown trees were broken off by vandals. Those cases are unsolved.

Since the city planted trees in the downtown parkways as part of the Franklin Street reconstruction project in 2008, at least seven of them have been replaced after vandals destroyed them.

The vandalism has caused officials to once again consider the possibility of installing security cameras downtown. This concept is expected to be discussed by either the Board of Public Works or the Police and Fire Commission — as well as the Port Washington Main Street board of directors — in the coming weeks.