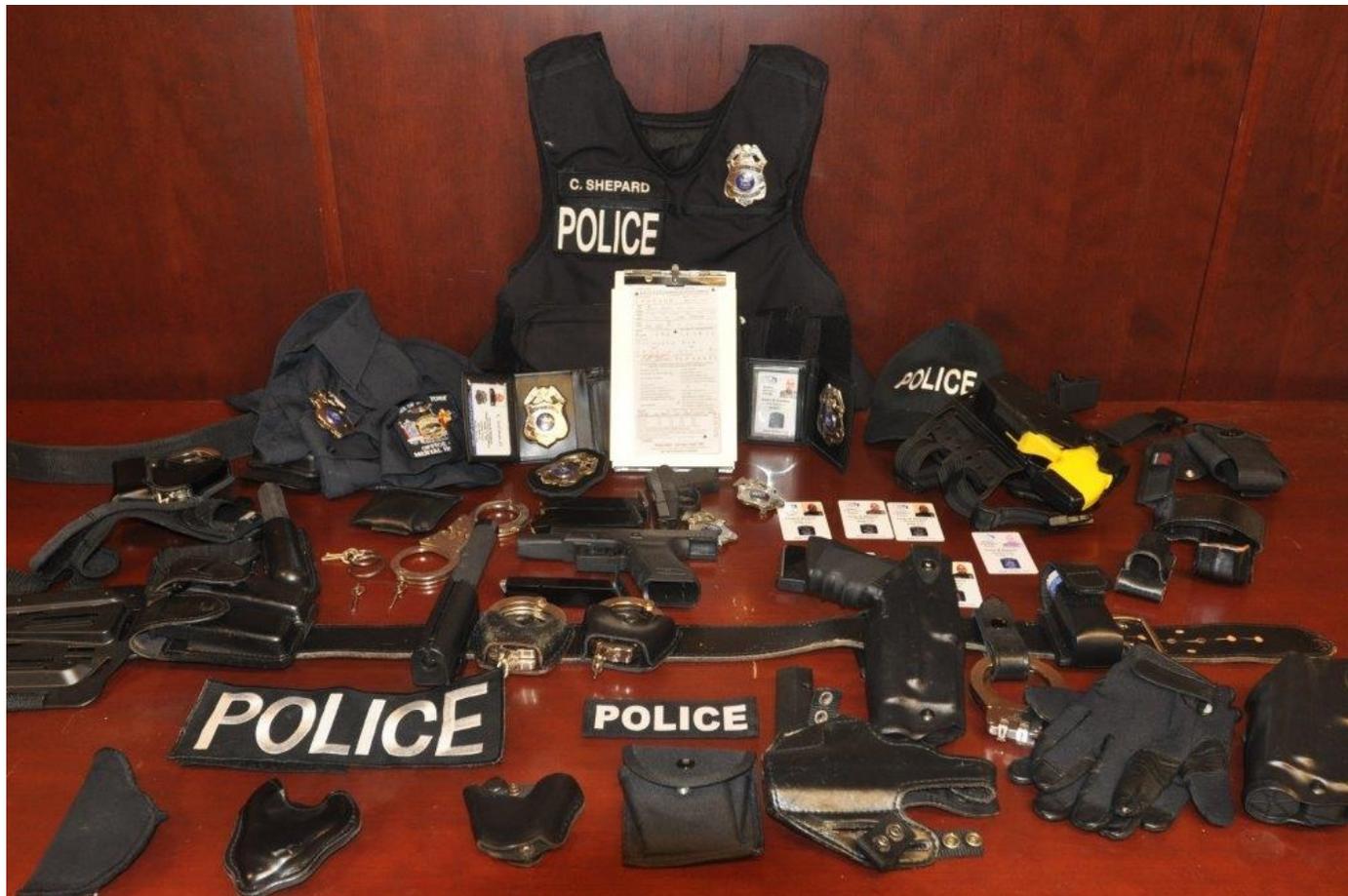


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Man who pretended to be police officer pleads guilty to six charges



The police-related items found in Corey Shepard's Wanda Avenue home. (Cheektowaga police)

A Cheektowaga man who masqueraded as a police officer on at least two occasions pleaded guilty in Erie County Court Wednesday to six crimes connected to his bizarre practice.

Corey Shepard, 26, of Wanda Avenue, admitted to two counts of attempted criminal possession of a forged instrument for having fake badges identifying him as an officer at Canisius College and with the Office of Mental Health. He used those IDs when committing the next two crimes, criminal impersonation in the second degree, when he identified himself at a traffic stop as a police officer in October and when he told an animal control officer in June that he was a mental health officer.

The traffic stop also resulted in a guilty plea to menacing in the second degree, when a genuine Cheektowaga police officer produced dash cam footage showing Shepard threatening the stopped motorist with a gun.

On Oct. 14, Shepard called 911 claiming to be an off-duty officer and reporting an erratic driver. Cheektowaga Police Officer Jacob Wodowski responded and, while he allowed the stopped driver to continue on, he believed that Shepard was acting suspiciously for someone claiming to be an officer.

Shepard drove off that night, but Cheektowaga police arrested him three days later at his home, where they also recovered police uniforms, a fake Taser, handcuffs, pepper spray, a police baton, a ballistic vest with the word "police" on it, seven fake police ID cards, six fake police badges and a baseball cap with "police" on it.

Shepard pleaded guilty Tuesday to criminal possession of stolen property in the fifth degree for having a Buffalo Police parking citation book among those items.

At the time of his arrest, Shepard was employed by a security company.

Judge Michael Pietruszka allowed Shepard to remain free on \$50,000 bond and set sentencing for April 6.