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Alhambra Woman Charged with Murder in Death of Newborn Girl

December 1, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

ALHAMBRA – A 41-year-old Alhambra woman suspected of leaving her newborn girl near railroad tracks in March was charged today with murder and assault on a child causing death, the District Attorney's office announced.

Tonya Mae Schaefer, (dob 4-1-65), is scheduled to be arraigned after 1:30 p. m. in Alhambra Superior Court, Division 5, said Deputy District Attorney Patricia Wilkinson with the Family Violence Division. Schaefer is charged in case No. GA066704. She is being held on \$1 million bail.

The infant's body was discovered March 12 south of Mission Road near Fremont Avenue. The baby, with the umbilical cord still attached, had been wrapped in plastic shopping bags and thrown over a chain-link fence, landing near the train tracks, officials said.

Alhambra police launched an intensive investigation that culminated in Schaefer's arrest on Wednesday.

Deputy District Attorney Habib Balian with the Family Violence Division has been assigned to prosecute the case.

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Animal Cruelty Charges Filed Against Rescue Operator

December 4, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LONG BEACH – Two executive officers of Noah’s Ark Animal Rescue in Long Beach have been charged with animal neglect after nearly 300 cats and dogs were seized from a warehouse in August, the District Attorney’s office announced today.

Alexia Selma Tiraki-Kyrklund, 39 (dob 6-2-67), and Gloria Ramos, 39 (dob 10-25-67), are scheduled to be arraigned in Long Beach Superior Court, Dept. J on Dec. 21. They were charged Friday in case No. NA072531 with 13 felony counts each of cruelty to animals and two misdemeanor counts each of violating zoning laws. Both women are executive officers of Noah’s Ark Animal Rescue.

The case will be jointly prosecuted by the District Attorney’s Office and the Long Beach City Prosecutor’s Office, said Deputy District Attorney Michael Tranbarger, head deputy of the Long Beach office.

After responding to a silent alarm in the 1300 block of Redondo Avenue in Long Beach on Aug. 23, Long Beach police smelled a foul odor and called Long Beach Animal Control. Animal Control officers discovered 152 dogs and 147 cats housed inside a warehouse. A state licensed veterinarian determined that the conditions inside the warehouse were detrimental to the health and safety of the animals. A majority of the cats were emaciated and covered in feces. More than half the dogs had fur that was severely matted with urine and feces. Many were emaciated and had various infections.

To deprive animals of necessary care or to subject them to needless suffering is a violation of Penal Code section 597(b) - Cruelty to Animals.

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Man Charged with Felony Vehicular Manslaughter in Fatal Pasadena Crash

December 4, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

PASADENA – An Altadena man was charged with vehicular manslaughter and several other charges today in connection with a traffic collision last week that claimed the life of a Pasadena woman.

Hal Lee Moore, 51 (dob 1-23-1955), was scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in Pasadena Superior Court (Department D). He has remained in custody following his arrest by Pasadena police on Thursday.

Moore is charged in case No. GA067887 with one felony count each of vehicular manslaughter, leaving the scene of an accident and evading an officer. He also is charged with three misdemeanor counts ? two of reckless driving with bodily injury and one of resisting an officer. Bail was recommended at \$175,000.

Bertha Vasquez Arias, 30, was killed in a three-vehicle collision shortly after 7 p.m. Thursday at Hill Street and Washington Boulevard in Pasadena. She was a passenger in a car that was struck after Moore's SUV allegedly went through a red light. The driver of the car and another driver whose car crashed at the intersection were injured.

Police said Moore drove away, but witnesses told officers which way he went and he was followed. Moore was arrested outside his Altadena home as he was getting out of his car, police said.

The case was filed by Deputy District Attorney John A. Perlstein of the Pasadena office. It has not yet been assigned to a prosecutor.

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Man Charged with Claremont Rape

December 6, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

POMONA – A 22-year-old man who allegedly attacked a woman in her Claremont home after trying to sell her magazine subscriptions was charged today with multiple counts of sexual assault, the District Attorney's office announced.

Arrestment for Rondie Lamont Walz, (dob 9-12-84), is scheduled today in Pomona Superior Court, Dept. N, said Deputy District Attorney Samer Hathout. He is charged in case No. KA077269 with one count each of forcible rape, forcible oral copulation, sexual penetration with a foreign object and kidnap for rape along with kidnap allegations. Prosecutors are asking that bail bet set at \$3.3 million.

Walz, who listed residences in Gig Harbor, Wash., and Reno, Nev., allegedly sexually assaulted a woman about 5 p.m. Saturday after he knocked on her door on Wheaton Avenue and tried to sell her magazine subscriptions, Claremont police said.

Detectives followed leads from the woman and from her neighbors, who had been contacted by the suspect the same day regarding magazine subscriptions, police said.

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Jury Recommends Death for Truck Driver Convicted of Murdering his Two Young Daughters

December 8, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

VAN NUYS – A Van Nuys jury deliberated less than a day before recommending today that an Anaheim truck driver be sentenced to death for murdering his two little girls four years ago.

Deputy District Attorney Andrea Thompson said 32-year-old Julian Arturo Beltran was ordered back to court for sentencing on Feb. 21 by Superior Court Judge Barry A. Taylor, who presided over the trial. Although a jury recommends the death penalty, it must be formally imposed by the court.

The same jury that returned today's verdict convicted Beltran on Nov. 13 of the first-degree murders of his daughters, Natalie, 2, and Marissa, 6. They also found true the special circumstance of multiple murder.

The jury deadlocked on a first-degree conviction for the murder of the girls' mother, the defendant's former girlfriend. He was convicted of the second-degree murder of 24-year-old Michele Barahona.

Thompson, who prosecuted the case with Deputy District Attorney Rose DeMattia, said the victims were stabbed to death at their home in Sun Valley on Jan. 23, 2002.

Beltran was arrested in Orange County a day after the triple murder and has remained in custody without bail.

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Man Charged with Assault in Alleged Break-in at Beverly Hills Home

December 11, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

BEVERLY HILLS – A man who allegedly broke into a Beverly Hills home last week and struggled with a security guard was charged today with felony assault.

Nicholas Samuel Marino, 23 (dob 1-29-1983), of Newport Beach was scheduled to appear after 2 p.m. today for arraignment in Division 2 of Beverly Hills Superior Court.

Marino was charged in case No. SA062436 with one count of assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury. Bail for the defendant, currently in custody, was recommended at \$30,000.

Authorities said Marino was stabbed by the security guard during a scuffle Wednesday night inside the home located in the 1100 block of Tower Road. The defendant was hospitalized for a short time, and then transferred to the custody of the Beverly Hills Police Department.

The case was filed by the District Attorney's Target Crime Division and remains under investigation.

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Jury Convicts Man of Murdering Two, Including Jailhouse Killing of a Witness to the Original Crime

December 11, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Long Beach man accused of fatally strangling a witness in jail while awaiting trial for killing another man was convicted by a jury today of capital murder.

The jury convicted 25-year-old Santiago Pineda of two counts of first-degree murder and found true the special circumstances of robbery murder, murder of a witness and multiple murder. The District Attorney's Office is seeking the death penalty. That portion of the trial starts on Jan. 2 in the court of Los Angeles Superior Judge William R. Pounders.

Pineda was in jail in April 2004 awaiting retrial for a 2002 murder when he managed to end up in the same location as 20-year-old Raul Tinajero, a convicted car thief who has been brought to Los Angeles from state prison to testify against Pineda.

Tinajero was strangled in jail on April 20, 2004, only a few days before Pineda's retrial was to begin in Long Beach Superior Court. Tinajero had testified at Pineda's first trial earlier that month, but a mistrial was declared and a new trial scheduled when Pineda's attorney became seriously ill.

The cases were combined and Pineda was tried for both the murder of Tinajero and that of Rafael Sanchez, who was run over by his own car and killed in 2002. Deputy District Attorney Lesley Klein is prosecuting the case.

A four-bed cell like the one in which Tinajero was killed was built in Judge Pounder's downtown courtroom during the trial. Klein said that since the evidence to be presented at the penalty phase includes that involving the cell, the huge structure will remain standing in the courtroom until the jury makes its final recommendation on Pineda's fate.

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ATTN: News & Assignment Editors
Re: 22nd Annual Holiday Giving Drive

December 12, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

On Wednesday, Dec. 13, at 9 a.m., Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley will present holiday gifts to four families who represent crime victims' families receiving gift packages during the District Attorney's 22nd Annual Holiday Giving Drive.

The event will occur at the Commerce Warehouse -- 5300 Harbor Street, Commerce.

Beginning this week, 250 families will receive gift baskets with toys and gift certificates. The baskets are made possible by donations from District Attorney Staff and corporate donors.

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D.A. Launches 2006 Holiday Giving Drive

December 13, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – District Attorney Steve Cooley today presented holiday gifts to four families who represent crime victims' families receiving gift packages during the District Attorney's 22nd Annual Holiday Giving Drive.

Beginning this week, 250 families will receive gift baskets with toys and gift certificates. The baskets were made possible by donations from District Attorney Staff and corporate donors.

"The holidays are usually a time of celebration when family and friends come together to enjoy the festivities of the season," Cooley said. "For hundreds of crime victim families in Los Angeles County, however, the festivities will be incomplete."

"In the District Attorney's Office, we seek justice for these victims in a court of law. But, we also want to help those who have been hurt by crime – by spreading holiday cheer."

The Holiday Giving Drive is a combined effort of the District Attorney's Victim-



Los Angeles County District Attorney Steve Cooley claps as 3-year-old Cheyenne Cheval sings Christmas carols. Cooley presented holiday gifts to four families who represent crime victims' families. Beginning this week, 250 families will receive gift baskets with toys and gift certificates donated by Cooley's staff and corporate donors.

[Click here for donation information.](#)

Witness Assistance Program and the Bureau of Community Relations.

District Attorney's personnel donated from their own pockets to the Holiday Giving Drive. Corporations donated money, toys and gift certificates. Ralphs contributed \$10,000.

Victims' families, including homicide victims, were nominated to receive the holiday gifts by Victim-Witness staff and District Attorney Personnel.

Four families participating in the Holiday Giving Drive who attended the press conference were:

- The Hernandez Family: Mario Diaz, 14, of Long Beach, was the victim of an armed robbery. Mario's father, Guillermo, 44, was shot trying to protect his son. Guillermo lost wages from time missed at work, suffered physically and continues to deal with the emotional trauma caused by the crime.
- Rogelio Balderas: Rogelio Balderas, 72, of Pico Rivera, was abused and beaten by his own grandson after he allowed him to stay with him. He lost the vision in his left eye due to a beating.
- The Cheval Family: Ashley Cheval was murdered earlier this year in a drive-by shooting. She left behind her only daughter, 3-year-old Cheyenne, who now lives with her grandmother, Marcia, in Los Angeles.
- The Williams Family: Zuri Williams was shot and killed when she was caught in the gun crossfire just outside her neighborhood store. She leaves behind three small children: 2-year-old Zuri Jr., 5-year-old Omar and 11-year-old Zuberi. They are being cared for by their grandmother, Venela of Los Angeles.

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Teen Enters Plea in Alleged Columbine-Style Plan

December 14, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LANCASTER – An 18-year-old man pleaded no contest today to conspiracy to commit a crime and possession of bomb-making ingredients for his role in planning a Columbine-style attack on Valentine's Day at Quartz Hill High School, the District Attorney's office announced.

Johnny Alvarez Casas entered the no contest plea before Judge Lisa Chung. He is scheduled to be sentenced to five years in state prison on Jan. 18, 2007 in Antelope Valley Superior Court, Dept. A19.

Casas and a 16-year-old boy allegedly acquired bomb-making instructions off the Internet and were planning a Valentine's Day 2006 attack that included shooting students and using improvised explosive devices. They were arrested in December 2005 after a girl contacted a Quartz Hill High vice principal.

Casas, who was originally charged as a juvenile, was charged as an adult after a Sylmar Juvenile Court judge in April found that he was unfit to be tried as a juvenile.

The second youth, (dob 1-18-1990), charged in case No. MJ12015 with one count each of conspiracy to commit murder and making a criminal threat, remains in custody. His adjudication hearing, the equivalent to a court trial for an adult, is pending. His next court date is Jan. 4, 2007 for a pretrial conference in Lancaster Superior Court, Dept. 285.

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District Attorney, State Attorney General Announce Sony BMG Settlement

December 19, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Record giant SONY BMG today entered a stipulated judgment to stop distributing software embedded in music CD's allowing potential access to hackers, the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office and the California Attorney General's Office jointly announced today.

The stipulated final judgment was part of a civil consumer protection complaint filed today by the D.A.'s Consumer Protection Division and the Atty. Gen.'s Consumer Law Section involving SONY BMG, a Delaware partnership of Sony Corp. of America and Europe's Bertelsmann AG that distributes music CDs nationwide.

The complaint alleges that SONY BMG distributed music CD titles in California containing a form of computer software - called "digital rights management" software - to limit the number of copies consumers could make of the music. Prosecutors said the software was inadequately disclosed to purchasers and hidden on their computers. In effect, the software reduced the consumers' control of their computers and allowed potential access to hackers.

The DA and AG alleged in their complaint that these business practices constitute false advertising, unfair competition and unlawful computer intrusion.

"In trying to gain market share, companies need to be sensitive to consumers' rights to privacy, especially in this electronic age," District Attorney Steve Cooley said.

State Atty. Gen. Bill Lockyer said: "Companies that want to load their CDs with software that limits the ability to copy music should fully inform consumers about it, not hide it, and make sure it doesn't inflict security

vulnerabilities on computers. To its credit, SONY BMG learned this lesson and has stopped the practices that led to this lawsuit.”

Lockyer added, “The settlement further protects consumers by prohibiting similar conduct in the future and requiring SONY BMG to pay consumers back for out-of-pocket expenses they incurred to repair harm to computers caused by the software.”

The stipulated final judgment, which contains no admission of liability by the parties, provides for a sweeping injunction against the unfair sales and software practices, and further provides for a restitution program for consumer victims and \$750,000 in penalties and costs -- \$622,000 in civil penalties and \$128,000 in agency costs of investigation and prosecution.

At about the same time, a similar stipulated final judgment obtained by the Texas Attorney General will be entered in Texas court, and additional actions by other state Attorneys General are anticipated soon thereafter.

Prosecutors allege that between January and November of 2005, SONY BMG issued 79 music titles that used two different forms of Digital Rights management Software -- Xtended Copy Protection “XCP” developed by First4 Internet, a United Kingdom company, and Media Max 5.0 developed by SunnComm, an Arizona company.

SONY BMG sold 52 titles containing XCP with total sales of \$6.6 million, and 27 MediaMax titles with \$6 million total sales. Approximately 15 percent of these sales were in California.

These copy-protected album releases contained software to limit the number of copies that could be made of the CD. This software installed itself - without adequate disclosure to consumers - when the users attempted to play the music CD on their Windows-based computer systems.

The case was handled for the Consumer Protection Division by DDAs Jonathan Fairtlough (213-580-3259), and Jeff McGrath (213-580-3378) and Head Deputy Tom Papageorge (213-580-3305).

CONTACT: The contact for SONY BMG is John McKay at 212-833-5520.

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Man Charged with Impersonating Army JAG Officer; Illegally Practicing Law

December 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A felony complaint for arrest warrant has been filed against a 39-year-old man accused of stealing the identity of an Army Judge Advocate General (JAG) officer and illegally practicing law in Los Angeles County.

In an arrest warrant for Rigoberto Vazquez, the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation noted that the defendant has made court appearances and represented "clients" in courts in Los Angeles, Downey, Pomona, Torrance and Santa Ana. Some of those clients are named victims in the complaint issued against Vasquez on Dec. 8.

Case No. BA313689 was filed by the District Attorney's Consumer Protection Division after an investigation by the Bureau of Investigation. Vazquez, who allegedly assumed the identity of Robert Vasquez, is charged with four counts of grand theft in connection with legal fees charged to clients. The complaint alleged the crimes occurred between March 1, 2005, and Nov. 30 of this year.

He also is charged with one count each of identity theft, residential burglary and false impersonation. Besides the seven felony counts, Vasquez is charged with one misdemeanor count of unauthorized practice of law. Bail was recommended at \$2 million.

Deputy District Attorney Thomas Wenke said the victim is a JAG Major. He is licensed to practice law in California, but has never done so, the prosecutor added.

Investigators said that anyone with information about the defendant should contact their local police agency immediately.

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Editors: Copies of the wanted poster and an additional photograph of the defendant can be emailed, if requested.

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Former Teacher at Chatsworth School Pleads to Molesting Boys

December 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

VAN NUYS – A former computer teacher at a Chatsworth private school pleaded no contest today to molesting boys. He faces a 10-year state prison term when he returns to court for sentencing in February.

Deputy District Attorney Isidoro Baly said 32-year-old Thomas Edward Jukes pleaded no contest to two counts of continuous sexual abuse of a child under the age of 14. The plea was made prior to Jukes' preliminary hearing before Van Nuys Superior Court Judge Karen J. Nudell.

Baly said the plea means that none of the young victims will be re-victimized by having to testify in court. He said he discussed the plea fully with the victims and their parents prior to it being entered today.

The defendant was arrested on April 27 by the FBI's Sexual Assault Felony Enforcement (SAFE) team and initially freed on \$100,000 bail. He was charged on May 16 and at the request of prosecutors, bail was increased to \$535,000. Jukes was jailed in lieu of bail on May 16 and remains in custody.

When the defendant's arrest was announced by the FBI in April, a press release issued by that office stated that Jukes had been relieved from his teaching job at Sierra Canyon School. Prosecutors said after the case was filed that none of the molestations occurred at the school.

The FBI release said the investigation began when a parent complained of an e-mail sent to a child. The FBI release also noted that Jukes had been a coach at the Valley Christian Athletic Association.

The FBI's SAFE team is a task force focusing on sex crimes against children. Members include the Los Angeles Police Department, the Los Angeles and Orange county Sheriffs' departments, the state Department of Justice's

Bureau of Investigation, the California Highway Patrol, the U.S. Attorney's office and the District Attorney's office. Criminal cases stemming from task force investigations can be tried in either state or federal courts, depending on the specific crimes alleged.

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Alleged Gang Member Charged with Murder, Hate Crime

December 26, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LONG BEACH – A 20-year-old reputed gang member was charged today with capital murder and hate crime allegations in connection with the Dec. 15 fatal shooting of a 14-year-old African-American girl, the District Attorney's office announced.

Ernesto Alcaarez, (dob 11-11-86), is scheduled to be arraigned sometime after 1:30 p.m. in Long Beach Superior Court, Dept. J, said Deputy District Attorney Ron Goudy. Alcaarez is being held without bail. Deputy District Attorney John Allen Ramseyer with the Hate Crimes Unit has been assigned to prosecute the case.

Alcaarez is charged in case No. NA072796 with one count of premeditated murder and six counts each of attempted premeditated murder, with the special circumstances of murder to further a gang and murder based on race. A decision will be made at a later date on whether prosecutors will seek the death penalty.

On Friday, Cheryl Greene, 14, was fatally shot after a group of Latino gang members allegedly opened fire without provocation and Cheryl and a group of friends she was with. Three others sustained non-threatening gunshot wounds and three escaped injury. The shooting occurred in a Harbor Gateway neighborhood.

Based on circumstances of the crime and the past actions of the 204th Street gang, the case is being filed as a hate crime.

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ATTN: News & Assignment Editors Long Beach P.D. Press Conference

December 28, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley will join Long Beach Police Chief Anthony Batts and other dignitaries at 1 p.m. today to discuss Wednesday's fatal shooting of Oscar Gabriel Gallegos, who is suspected of shooting and critically wounding two Long Beach police officers.

The 1 p.m. conference will be at the Long Beach Police Headquarters, 400 West Broadway, in the Community Room.

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Man Charged in 19-Year-Old Murders of Huntington Park Couple

November 2, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Capital murder charges were filed today against a man accused of murdering an elderly Huntington Park couple in their home 19 years ago, the District Attorney's office announced.

Donald Eugene Phillips, 40 (dob 9-8-1966), is expected to be arraigned tomorrow afternoon in Division 69 of the Metropolitan Area Court, 1945 S. Hill St. He was arrested yesterday and is being held without bail.

Phillips is charged in case No. VA097962 with two counts of murder with the special circumstances of murder during a robbery or attempted robbery, murder during a burglary or attempted burglary, and multiple murder. The complaint alleged the defendant used a knife to commit the crimes.

The complaint alleged that Edna and George Darrow, both in their 70s, were killed some time between April 16 and April 19, 1987.

The case was re-investigated by the Sheriff's Unsolved Homicide Unit, which led to the criminal charges filed today by Deputy District Attorney John Lewin of the Major Crimes Division.

The District Attorney's office will not decide whether to seek the death penalty against Phillips until his case moves closer to trial.

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Jury Recommends Death for Gang Member Convicted of Murdering Two, Including a 12-Year-Old Boy

November 3, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles Superior Court jury recommended the death penalty today for a South Los Angeles gang member convicted of murdering two people, including a 12-year-old boy, and trying to kill seven others during a three-day rampage in 2004.

Deputy District Attorney Truc Do of the Hardcore Gang Division said 21-year-old Carlos Marvin Argueta is scheduled to be formally sentenced to death on Feb. 2 by trial Judge Curtis Rappe.

The jury that recommended the death penalty convicted Argueta last month of murdering his two victims on Feb. 14 and 15, 2004. Six of the seven attempted murder convictions were from those two shootings. The seventh attempted murder involved a Feb. 19, 2004, shooting.

The 12-year-old victim, Gregory John Gabriel, was killed while attending a sleepover at the home of a friend. He had gone out with his friend's older brother and was in a group that was fired upon in front of the Western Club in the 5700 block of South Western Avenue on Feb. 15. Two others were wounded, but survived.

The day before ? Valentine's Day ? 24-year-old Jorge Lua was shot and killed in another South Los Angeles shooting. The final shooting occurred on Feb. 19, 2004. That victim also survived.

Argueta's co-defendant, 21-year-old Enrique Gonzalez, is scheduled to go on trial for the killings on Monday. Rappe will be the trial judge.

Gonzalez also is charged with the murders, but the prosecution is not seeking the death penalty in his case. Instead, if convicted of both murders, Gonzalez faces a sentence of life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Argueta and Gonzalez were arrested on Feb. 26, 2004, by Los Angeles police. They have remained in custody without bail.

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Operators of Stereo 1 Agree to Injunction, Civil Monetary Relief in Consumer Lawsuit

November 6, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – The operators of Stereo 1 automotive electronic shops in Los Angeles and Ventura counties agreed to a stipulated judgment signed today to settle a consumer lawsuit alleging “bait and switch” advertising practices.

The action was filed in Los Angeles Superior Court by consumer protection prosecutors from the Los Angeles and Ventura county District Attorneys’ offices.

In the judgment signed by Superior Court Judge Alice Altoon, defendants Abdallah Abutarboush and Hussein Thiab Abuatieh agreed to pay \$125,000 in civil monetary relief for investigative and prosecution costs. The defendants entered into the agreement without an admission of wrongdoing.

Abutarboush and Abuatieh operate three Stereo 1 stores in Los Angeles County and one in Ventura County. The Los Angeles County stores are in Lomita, Northridge and the City of Industry. The Ventura store is in Oxnard. The stores sell and install automotive electronic equipment including radios, cassette-tape players, compact disc players, amplifiers, speakers, digital-video-disc players and alarm systems.

Abutarboush owns a store in Bakersfield and Abuatieh has a store in Rancho Cucamonga. Although the allegations in the civil lawsuit are applicable only to Los Angeles and Ventura counties, the Kern and San Bernardino county District Attorneys’ offices signed the stipulated judgment.

The civil lawsuit alleged misleading advertising, failure to disclose prices of all goods and services that must be purchased together, and unfair competition.

The case was investigated by the California Bureau of Electronic and

Appliance Repair and Automotive Repair and investigators from the Los Angeles and Ventura District Attorneys' offices. A series of undercover operations were conducted by the state investigators, who posed as customers answering advertisements in various publications including the Auto Seller, the Pennysaver, the Trade Express and the Ventura County Star.

The injunction prohibits the alleged actions. Monetary relief includes \$30,442 to the state agencies for investigative costs and \$12,200 to the investigative and attorney fees of the Los Angeles, Ventura, Kern and San Bernardino District Attorneys' offices.

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Editors: For further information, please contact Deputy District Attorney Leslie Hanke in Los Angeles, 213-580-3255; Senior Deputy District Attorney Gregory W. Brose in Ventura, 805-662-1705; or Matthew Geragos 213-625-3900.

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District Attorney Announces New High Tech Crime Division

November 7, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – District Attorney Steve Cooley today announced the creation of a new division dedicated to prosecuting identity theft and computer crimes that is made possible in part by a \$1 million increase to the D.A.'s budget by the county Board of Supervisors.

The new [High Technology Crime Division](#) will focus more resources on the fastest growing forms of fraud in Los Angeles County -- high tech computer crime and identity theft. The ID-theft caseload in the District Attorney's Office has skyrocketed from zero in 1997 to 1,515 cases last year. Economic losses from computer crime in Los Angeles County now exceed \$300 million each year, according to the Joint Council on Information Age Crime.

"Identity theft has expanded from one-on-one credit card fraud to complex and sophisticated schemes that are highly organized and include multiple defendants," Cooley said. "This new division will build on our strong history of prosecuting identity theft and electronic crimes."

The new division, which begins operation on Nov. 15, will be headed by Deputy District Attorney Kathryn Showers, who was director of the Victim-Witness Assistance Program.

Cooley said creation of the new division is due largely to the leadership of Supervisor Yvonne Burke and the Board of Supervisors in voting in September for a \$1 million increase in resources to the D.A.'s office.

"Thanks to Supervisor Burke and the Board, we can now expand staff and increase our efforts with the Southern California High Tech Crime Task Force, the Southern California Identity Theft Task Force and the Los Angeles Electronic Crime Task Force."

The new High Technology Crime Division, based within the Bureau of Fraud and Corruption Prosecutions, will add 10 prosecutors and three investigators incrementally to vertically prosecute cases from the three task forces in addition to providing assistance and training to prosecutors throughout the county. Previously the D.A.'s High Tech Crimes Unit had four prosecutors and five investigators assigned to it and operated under the Consumer Protection Division.

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Swede Pleads No Contest to Embezzlement, Gun Possession in Ferrari Case

November 7, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A 44-year-old Swedish businessman and felon who gained international notoriety after he crashed a \$1 million red Ferrari Enzo in Malibu in February pleaded no contest today to embezzlement and felon in possession of a gun, the District Attorney's office announced.

Bo Stefan M. Eriksson entered the plea before Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Patricia Schnegg. In addition to pleading no contest to two counts of embezzlement and felon in possession of a gun, Eriksson admitted the special allegation that the fraud exceeded \$500,000. He earlier pleaded no contest to one count of misdemeanor DUI. In exchange for the plea, two counts of grand theft were dismissed.

Judge Schnegg immediately sentenced Eriksson to three years in state prison on each count, which will run concurrently. She also sentenced him to six months for the DUI conviction, which also will run concurrently. He also was ordered to pay \$5,000 in restitution. Another restitution hearing was set for Dec. 7 before Judge Schnegg.

The case was successfully prosecuted by Deputy District Attorneys Tamara Hall and Loren Naiman of the Auto Insurance Fraud Unit.

"Justice was served by this plea," Hall said following the court appearance. "This is a fair resolution and is consistent with a majority of jurors who found him guilty on the embezzlement charges."

Eriksson, a former executive with Gizmondo, a European video game company, gained notoriety after he crashed a red Ferrari Enzo into a power pole on Pacific Coast Highway on Feb. 21, totaling the \$1 million vehicle. An investigation revealed Eriksson, who walked away from the crash, was driving at speeds of more than 160 mph and was driving under the influence

of alcohol at the time of the crash.

An investigation also revealed that in 2005 he had imported the red Ferrari, a black Ferrari Enzo and a rare Mercedes from Great Britain to California. The cars were owned by British financial institutions and leased to Eriksson, and the lease agreements did not allow Eriksson to take the cars out of Great Britain. Eriksson today pleaded to embezzlement involving the black Ferrari and the Mercedes McLaren. Charges were earlier dismissed involving the red Ferrari that was totaled.

During a sheriff's search of his Bel-Air home, deputies discovered a handgun. As part of the plea today, Eriksson admitted that he was convicted of fraud and sentenced to five years in prison in Sweden in 1994. As a result his conviction in Sweden, he was not allowed to own or possess any weapons in the United States.

Hall said as a result of his plea today, he will be deported after he serves his prison sentence and he will not be allowed to return to the United States.

His Bel-Air home has been seized and is being sold by a court-appointed receiver to benefit the victims and to pay any fines. The house is estimated to be worth between \$3.9 million to \$5.2 million.

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Attn: Assignment & News Editors Courageous Citizen Awards

November 8, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

On Thursday, Nov. 9, Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley will honor five Courageous Citizens who assisted on three cases. The luncheon ceremony will be hosted by the Kiwanis Club of Northridge. Details of the event are as follows:

Date: Thursday, Nov. 9, 2006

Time: 12:00 p.m. Luncheon
12:45 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Awards ceremony

Location: Odyssey Restaurant
15600 Odyssey Drive
Granada Hills

Honorees include three San Fernando Valley residents who assisted a woman in the parking lot of a Vons in Chatsworth being assaulted in an attempted robbery; a 15-year-old Pacoima girl who testified after a relative pulled a gun on her older brother; and a Los Angeles woman who helped solve a double homicide involving gang members.

CONTACT: Mark Delgado or Carol Baker, 213-974-7401.

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Sheriff, D.A. Announce New Jail Early Release Policy

November 9, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES - Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca was joined today by District Attorney Steve Cooley to announce a new early release policy that requires all jail inmates to serve at least 25 percent of their sentence before being eligible for release.

The new policy will take affect by the end of the year and will apply to all inmates sentenced to county jail.

"We are always looking for ways to do our job better," Sheriff Lee Baca said. "We run the largest jail system in the world, and it takes the best minds to operate this massive operation. We have those minds in the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department.

"I also want to thank District Attorney Steve Cooley for his most valuable input on this matter. This new policy will move us forward to where one day all inmates will serve the entire time required."

Cooley echoed Sheriff Baca's comments.

"I commend Sheriff Baca for implementing this new policy," Cooley said. "This will assure that sentences imposed by the court will be carried out in a predictable and even-handed manner."

Cooley noted that although all county prosecutors preferred that individuals sentenced to county jail serve 100 percent of their time, a longstanding federal court order limiting jail capacity has tied the Sheriff's hands.

Redondo Beach City Attorney Michael W. Webb, who is president of the County Prosecutors Association, also applauded the announcement.

"Defendants will no longer be able to routinely turn down offers that involve

alternative sentences such as Cal Trans or other forms of community service," he said.

"This new method of managing the percentage of time served by those sentenced to county jail better enables us to do our jobs as prosecutors," he said.

For further information contact Steve Whitmore, Senior Media Advisor, 323-573-2387, or Jane Robison or Joe Scott, D.A. Media Relations, 213-974-3528.

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District Attorney Honors Courageous Citizens

November 9, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Five individuals who exhibited acts of heroism and bravery were honored today by District Attorney Steve Cooley during the Courageous Citizens Awards Ceremony sponsored by the Kiwanis Club of Northridge.

The District Attorney's Office created the Courageous Citizen Award in 1985 to commend those individuals who have acted at considerable personal risk to help a victim of crime, assist in the capture of a suspect, or testify in the face of extraordinary pressures.

The awards were presented to recipients nominated by deputy district attorneys. Honorees were (Information on each recipient follows.)

- Tony Deri, Chatsworth; Thomas Griffin, Chatsworth; Luis Mendez, Reseda

On Oct. 19, a woman in the parking lot of a Vons in Chatsworth was the victim of an attempted robbery and assault. Luis, a 22-year-old Vons employee, came to the woman's aid and chased the knife-wielding suspect away. He followed the suspect and was joined by Tony, 32, and Thomas, 35, in his pursuit. Ultimately, the honorees struggled with the suspect and detained him until police arrived.

Defendant Ralph Walton, 62, recently pleaded no contest to attempted robbery. He is scheduled to be sentenced Nov. 16.

- Ana Flores, Los Angeles
Ana, 49, helped police solve a gang double homicide by describing the suspects and showing police where they discarded a gun that was used in the shooting.

CONTACT: Mark Delgado or Carol Baker, 213-974-7401.

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Attn: Assignment Editors - Calendar Correction

November 9, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

The Media Relations calendar for the week of Nov. 13-17 incorrectly lists the case of **Los Angeles Fire Captain David Jaime Del Toro** for an appearance in Division 30 on Monday. Del Toro will appear in court Monday morning, but **it will be Department 100 on the 13th floor of the Criminal Justice Center, 210 W. Temple St.** The previous murder case against Del Toro (BA307749) was dismissed on Nov. 8 due to a superseding indictment.

The indictment was unsealed yesterday when Del Toro was arrested and brought to court, but his arraignment was put over until Monday, Nov. 13. The arraignment is scheduled for the 8:30 a.m. calendar. The new case number is BA 320299. The case is being prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Robert Grace of the Major Crimes Division. Contact: Sandi Gibbons or Jane Robison, 213-974-3528.

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Woman Involved in Michael Jackson Trial Pleads in Welfare Fraud Case

November 13, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A woman involved in the Santa Barbara County trial of entertainer Michael Jackson pleaded no contest today to welfare fraud and agreed to repay the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) more than \$8,600.

Prosecutor James Baker, assistant head deputy of the Welfare Fraud Division, said Janet Arvizo, is scheduled to be sentenced on April 27 by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Barbara R. Johnson.

Prior to the plea, Arvizo, 38, is to pay DPSS \$8,606.98. Baker said \$5,000 is to be deposited with the county agency tomorrow.

In addition, the judge ordered Arvizo to perform 150 hours of community service. If both the community service and the restitution are complete by the April 27 sentencing date, the charge will be reduced to a misdemeanor, Baker said.

Baker said the defendant announced that her husband, Jay Jackson, is being transferred to a military post in Georgia late this month. The judge told the defendant to send to the court by Jan. 5 proof of enrollment in a Georgia community service program.

The prosecutor said the defendant also announced to the court that because she is married to her current husband, her legal name is Janet Jackson.

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Jury Convicts Anaheim Truck Driver of Murdering His Two Young Daughters

November 13, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

VAN NUYS – An Anaheim truck driver was convicted today of the first-degree murders of his two little girls, but a Van Nuys jury deadlocked on the degree of murder for the children's mother.

Deputy District Attorney Andrea Thompson said 10 of the jurors voted to convict Julian Arturo Beltran of the first-degree murder of his former girlfriend, 24-year-old Michele Barahona, in Sun Valley on Jan. 23, 2002. Two jurors voted to convict him of second-degree murder. Trial Judge Barry A. Taylor declared a mistrial on that count.

However, the jurors convicted Beltran of the first-degree murders of his daughters, 2-year-old Natalie and 6-year-old Marissa. Like their mother, both were stabbed. The jury also found true the special circumstance of multiple murder.

Thompson, who is seeking the death penalty, said the penalty phase of the trial begins before the same jury on Monday, Nov. 20.

Beltran, 32, was arrested in Orange County a day after the triple murder in Sun Valley. He has remained in custody without bail.

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Three Charged in Carson Gas Station Murders

November 14, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

COMPTON – Murder charges were filed by the District Attorney's office today against two young men and a teenage boy accused of fatally shooting two gas station employees in Carson on Nov. 4.

The trio is expected to appear for arraignment this afternoon in Division 12 of Compton Superior Court. Each is charged in case No. TA087610 with two counts of murder and two counts of attempted robbery.

Although filed as a capital case, a decision on whether to seek the death penalty against either or both of the two adults charged will not be made until the case moves closer to trial. Because he was under the age of 18 when the crimes occurred, the teenager would not be eligible for the death penalty. However, he faces a possible life-without-parole sentence if convicted as charged.

Named in the complaint are Eric Elmo Sanford, either 15 or 16; Julio Perez, 22 (dob 11-19-1983); and Adam Loza, 23 (dob 6-5-1983). All listed Los Angeles residences. Deputy District Attorney Beth L. Widmark, who filed the case, said the juvenile defendant has two dates of birth in official records – one showing he is 15 and other showing he is 16.

Eduardo Roco, 74, of Carson, and Esther Arteaga, 32, of Wilmington, were shot to death in the pre-dawn attempted robbery of the gas station in the 22200 block of Avalon Boulevard in Carson. The teenager was arrested by Sheriff's Homicide investigators on Nov. 10 and the other two were taken into custody on Nov. 11.

All are being held without bail. The teenager is in juvenile custody.

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Vernon Mayor, Family Members and Former City Administrator Charged in Public Corruption Probe

November 15, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – An investigation into allegations of public corruption in Vernon resulted in charges being filed today against the city's mayor, his wife and son and the former city administrator.

The District Attorney's Public Integrity Division launched an investigation in April 2005 following allegations that the city's former administrator, Bruce Malkenhorst Sr., 71, misappropriated public funds for personal use.

The 19-month investigation uncovered evidence of voter fraud. Although Leonis Malburg, who has been Vernon's mayor for more than 50 years, claimed he lived in a small Vernon apartment in the 2800 block of Leonis Blvd., prosecutors charge he has been living in Hancock Park.

His wife and son also claimed to live in Vernon and they voted in Vernon city elections even though they lived in Hancock Park, prosecutors allege.

The three are charged in case No. BA312405. Malburg, 77, is charged with seven counts, including voter fraud, assisting unqualified voters and false registration. His wife, 80, is charged with one felony count each of false voter registration and fraudulently voting. John Malburg is charged with false voter registration and perjury.

Malkenhorst is charged in case No. BA312388 with 18 counts of misappropriation of public funds for allegedly taking \$60,000 of city money for personal use.

The investigation was hampered by the city's refusal to voluntarily turn over city records. A lengthy court battle ended in June when the California Supreme Court refused Vernon's request to keep the records sealed. The D.

A.'s office was allowed to review more than 1,700 pages of city records leading to the criminal charges.

Arrest information will be announced later.

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Son of Vernon Mayor Charged with Child Sexual Molestation

November 16, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – The 37-year-old son of Vernon Mayor Leonis Malburg is scheduled to be arraigned today on a felony complaint charging him with multiple counts of child sexual abuse, possession of child pornography and using a minor for sex acts, the District Attorney's office announced.

The charges against John Joseph Malburg stem from a 19-month investigation by the District Attorney's Public Integrity Division into allegations of public corruption in Vernon. The investigation expanded after D.A. investigators allegedly uncovered child pornography on a computer belonging to John Malburg, the dean of students at Daniel Murphy Catholic High School, at his Hancock Park home.

The D.A.'s Sex Crimes Division and the LAPD's Sexually Exploited Child Unit investigated the case, and a felony complaint for arrest warrant was filed Tuesday, said Deputy District Attorney Richard Taklender, with the Sex Crimes Division.

Malburg allegedly sexually abused two minor boys and posed a third in a sexually explicit video for commercial purposes. He also allegedly repeatedly videotaped several minors without their knowledge while they showered at burg's home.

Malburg is charged in case No. BA312431 with three counts of lewd act on a child, one count of continuous sexual abuse, three counts of sending harmful matter, one count of using a minor for sex acts and two counts of using a minor for commercial sex acts, all felonies. He also is charged with possessing child pornography and unlawful invasion of privacy, both misdemeanors. Bail is \$495,000.

Malburg is scheduled to surrender at 11 a.m. today at the Foltz Criminal

Justice Center, Division 30, for arraignment. He is also scheduled to be arraigned in the separate case charging him with false voter registration and perjury.

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Man Convicted in Santa Monica Street Market Deaths Sentenced

November 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Saying that the man convicted of killing 10 people in 2003 when his car plowed into a throng attending a Santa Monica street market “deserves to go to prison,” a Los Angeles judge today cited the aging defendant’s failing health and burden to the taxpayers as he instead ordered five years of supervised probation and more than \$100,000 in restitution, fees and fines.

George Russell Weller, 89, was not in court when Judge Michael Johnson imposed sentenced. Because of his failing health, the court had ruled that the defendant did not have to attend either his trial or sentencing.

The judge, however, said he fully agreed with last month’s jury conviction of Weller on 10 counts of vehicular manslaughter with gross negligence. And the jurist said he was troubled by what he saw as Weller’s lack of remorse.

Saying Weller displayed an “enormous indifference to human life,” the judge termed “callous” statements made by the defendant when he emerged from his car: “Just think of how I feel,” and, “Why didn’t you get out of my way?”

“George Weller clearly deserves a prison sentence,” the judge said. But he noted physician declarations filed by the defense that claimed Weller is bedridden, frail and has mounting medical problems. The judge said to order a prison term would be a burden on prison authorities, a burden to the taxpayers who would have to pay the cost of the aging defendant’s care during incarceration and would “probably kill Mr. Weller.

The judge said he was more interested in Weller paying restitution. He ordered \$57,500 restitution for the survivors of two of the victims who have applied. He also ordered \$44,200 in fines and fees.

Deputy District Attorney Sam Dordulian said that as more requests for restitution come in from families of victims, he would give them to the court.

Dordulian, who assisted Deputy District Ann Ambrose in the prosecution of the case, asked that further medical and psychological testing be done prior to sentencing. He said that even with the declarations that were presented to the court, there is a need for additional testing.

Prior to sentencing, family members of one of the victims spoke, as well as a nephew of Weller and one of his attorneys.

Weller was convicted on vehicular manslaughter with gross negligence for the deaths of Theresa Bregalia, 50, of Bronx, N.Y.; Brendon Esfahani, 7 months, of Los Angeles; Molok Ghoulia, 62, of Los Angeles; Gloria Gonzalez, 35, of Venice; Movsha Hoffman, 78, of Santa Monica; Leroy Lattier, 55, a transient; Diana McCarthy, 41, of New York, N.Y.; Kevin McCarthy, 50, of New York, N.Y.; Cindy Valladares, 3, of Los Angeles; and Lynne Ann Weaver, 47, of Woodland Hills.

The victims were struck while shopping at the Farmer's Market on Arizona Avenue in Santa Monica on July 16, 2003. Sixty-eight other people were seriously injured.

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Man Pleads Guilty to Unlawful Computer Access at Law Firm

November 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A man who was working as a temporary word processor at a Los Angeles law firm pleaded guilty today to unlawfully accessing the company computer in connection with its legal representation of Diebold Inc.

As part of his plea, 44-year-old Stephen Mark Heller wrote an apology to the law firm, Jones, Day, Rivas & Pogue. The letter, which Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michael Pastor entered into the court record, read:

"Today, I pled guilty to unlawfully taking Jones Day's privileged documents without its permission while I worked there. There was no excuse for my conduct. I very much regret taking the documents. I also regret any disparaging statements suggesting that Jones Day committed any wrongful acts. Upon reflection, I now believe and understand that such statements were unjustified. I apologize to Jones Day and its client."

Pastor placed Heller on three years of probation. Deputy District Attorney Jeffrey McGrath of the High Tech Crime Unit said severe restrictions were placed upon Heller if he needed to use a computer during employment. Heller, the prosecutor said, must make full disclosure to any company that plans to hire him, as well as seeking court approval for the job.

Besides the written apology, Heller was ordered to pay Jones Day \$10,000 in restitution.

As part of a plea agreement, one count each of second-degree commercial burglary and receiving stolen property were dismissed after Heller pleaded to the felony count of accessing a computer and making copies (Section 502(c) (2) of the California Penal Code).

The case against Heller was filed in February of this year after an investigation by the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation.

Heller worked as a temporary employee in the law firm's word processing department. It was alleged that between Jan. 29, 2004, and Feb. 18, 2004, the defendant used his computer terminal to access, print and take documents relating to Jones Day's representation of Diebold Inc. Some of the documents he took ended up being published by the Oakland Tribune and an internet web site.

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Man Convicted of 30-Year-Old San Pedro Christmas Murder

November 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles jury deliberated about a day before finding an 80-year-old Harbor City man guilty of murdering a San Pedro woman more than 30 years ago.

Adolph Theodore Laudenberg faces a sentence of life in prison with the possibility of patrol when he returns to the court of trial Judge Anita H. Dymant on Jan. 8. He remains in custody on \$1 million bail.

Laudenberg was convicted of murdering 43-year-old Lois Petrie on Dec. 26, 1972. She was last seen alive around midnight on Dec. 25, 1972, when she left Tommy's Yacht Club in San Pedro. Her body was found by her sister the next morning. A coroner's autopsy indicated that the victim was suffocated with a pillow.

Petrie's body was found in her tiny home, which was situated behind a hotel in San Pedro.

Los Angeles police questioned Laudenberg about the murder in 1975, but there was insufficient evidence to make an arrest. Detectives continued working the case and information they received in 2002 persuaded them to take another look at Laudenberg.

Scientific evidence was developed leading to the case being filed against Laudenberg in September 2003.

Deputy District Attorney Lowell Anger prosecuted the case before the jury of eight men and four women.

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Man Convicted of West Covina Murders of Brother, Sister-In-Law

November 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

POMONA – A Pomona jury, after less than a day of deliberation convicted a 67-year-old man today of fatally shooting his brother and sister-in-law at their West Covina home, then setting a fire to cover up the murders.

Kent Wesley Holman was convicted of the first-degree murders of his brother, and sister-in-law, Lavar and Adeline Holman. The couple, in their 80s, were found shot to death in their condominium in the 1700 block of Aspen Village Way in August 2005. The garage had been torched, and the bodies were found by fire fighters who responded to the call.

Besides the two counts of first-degree murder, the jury also found true the special circumstance of multiple murder. It also convicted the defendant of one count each of arson of a structure and first-degree burglary. In addition, the jury found that the defendant personally used a handgun to commit the crimes.

Pomona Superior Court Judge David Buckley, who presided over the trial, scheduled Feb. 13 for sentencing. Because the District Attorney's office opted against seeking the death penalty, Holman faces life imprisonment without the possibility of parole.

Kent Holman turned himself in to authorities in St. George, Utah, after the murders. He lived in St. George. He was extradited to Los Angeles County for trial and remains in custody without bail.

Deputy District Attorney Robert Serna of the Pomona office prosecuted Holman.

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Former Alhambra Police Sergeant Pleads Guilty to Child Molestation

November 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A former Alhambra police sergeant pleaded guilty today to molesting two teenage boys, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Renee Korn of the Justice System Integrity Division said Michael James Fisher, 42, entered the plea prior to the start of his scheduled preliminary hearing in Los Angeles Superior Court.

Fisher was charged last August with molesting one of the victims during an eight-month period in 2003. The second victim, according to the complaint, was molested in 2005 and 2006. Both victims were in their mid-teens at the time the crimes occurred.

Korn said Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Luis Lavin allowed Fisher to remain free on \$100,000 bail pending sentencing on Jan. 9. The prosecutor said Fisher will be sentenced to three years in state prison.

Fisher pleaded guilty to five felony counts involving both victims. Five remaining counts are scheduled to be dismissed at the time of sentencing.

The Alhambra Police Department suspended the defendant around the time of his arrest on Aug. 14. The criminal case against him was filed on Aug. 30. Fisher later left the police department.

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Attn: News & Assignment Editors Peña Shooting Q&A with JSID Prosecutors

November 28, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

Prosecutors from the D.A.'s Justice System Integrity Division who reviewed the July 10, 2005 fatal shooting of Jose Raul Lemus Pena and Suzie Marie Pena by LAPD officers will be available to answer questions at 2 p.m. TODAY in JSID offices on the FIRST floor of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center, 210 W. Temple St.

Entry is just inside the Temple Street doors.

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Alhambra Woman Pleads in Death of 2-Year-Old Foster Child

November 29, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

PASADENA – An Alhambra woman charged with the child abuse murder of a 2-year-old foster daughter pleaded no contest today to being an accessory in exchange for agreeing to testify against her husband, the District Attorney's office announced.

Frances Abundis, 36 (dob 12-9-1969), entered the plea to the amended count of being an accessory before Pasadena Superior Court Judge Teri Schwartz, said Deputy District Attorney Franco A. Baratta of the Family Violence Division, who is prosecuting the case. She also pleaded no contest to one count of possession for sale of marijuana. She will be sentenced to 16 months in state prison at a later date.

In exchange for leniency, she agreed to testify truthfully against her husband, Armando Abundis Sr., 33 (dob 2-8-73), whose new trial date was set for Jan. 29, 2007. He is charged with one count each of murder, assault on a child causing death and child abuse.

In return for her plea, one count each of assault on a child causing death, murder and child abuse were dismissed.

The complaint alleged that the child was assaulted sometime between Oct. 10 and Oct. 11, 2005 when she died. The couple had been the little girl's foster parents since she was about 9 months old.

The case was investigated by the Alhambra Police Department.

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Rafael Perez Sentenced on Perjury Plea; Ordered to Use Real Name

November 30, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

TORRANCE – Rafael Antonio Perez, the disgraced former Los Angeles police officer whose disclosures sparked what became known as the Rampart Police Division Scandal, was sentenced to a probationary term today and ordered to use his real name.

Deputy District Attorney Steven Schreiner said Torrance Superior Court Judge William Hollingsworth told the 39-year-old defendant he must use his real name of Ray Lopez. As a condition of three years of supervised probation, the defendant also was ordered to perform 300 hours of community service.

Perez was working with the LAPD's anti-gang CRASH unit in the Rampart Division when arrested and charged with stealing cocaine from the department's evidence locker. He pleaded guilty in 2000 to grand theft and possession of cocaine for sale. He was sentenced to five years in state prison, and then prosecuted in U.S. District Court for violating the civil rights of a suspect shot by police. He pleaded guilty in that case and received a two-year federal sentence.

The defendant was arrested by Department of Motor Vehicle investigators in July of this year at the Inglewood office of the Perez's federal parole officer.

He was charged with lying on a DMV application. He pleaded no contest in October to one felony count of perjury.

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Former Attorney Arrested, Charged with Grand Theft

October 2, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A former attorney was arrested this morning by LAPD detectives on a felony complaint charging him with stealing nearly \$1.5 million from two clients, including a 90-year-old female client who suffered from dementia, the District Attorney's office announced.

Steven Krell, who resigned from the State Bar in 2004, was arrested at his Studio City home without incident, said Deputy District Attorney Lynne Smith of the Major Fraud Division. He is scheduled to be arraigned after 8:30 a.m. Tuesday at the Foltz Criminal Justice Center, Division 30. He is being held on \$1.5 million bail.

Krell, 58 (dob 3-10-48), is charged in case No. BA309243 with two counts of grand theft and one count of theft from elder with the special allegation that the theft exceeded \$150,000.

Between 1997 to 2003, Krell was hired to help manage trust accounts. During that time, he allegedly embezzled nearly \$1 million from a trust fund for a 90-year-old woman who was mentally incapacitated due to age. At the same time, Krell allegedly stole approximately \$400,000 from another account he was managing.

The alleged thefts were discovered in 2003 after a business manager became suspicious when he learned Krell was allegedly staying in expensive suites in Las Vegas and gambling at high roller tables.

Krell, who was admitted to the California State Bar in 1982, resigned in 2004 and is no longer eligible to practice law. If convicted, he's facing more than six years in state prison.

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Mother Receives Maximum Sentence for Murdering Her 10-Year-Old Son

October 3, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles woman was sentenced today to the maximum term of 26 years to life in prison for fatally stabbing her 10-year-old son two years ago following an argument with the boy's father.

Deputy District Attorney Steven Ipson of the Family Violence Division said 30-year-old Rocio Santoyo was sentenced by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge David M. Mintz. Mintz presided over Santoyo's jury trial, which ended last week with a jury convicting her of first-degree murder and finding that she used a knife to kill her only child, Solomon.

Ipson said the woman stabbed the boy in the jugular after blindfolding him. She left a note for the boy's father, Walter Roa, saying, "Now you only have three children."

Roa and the defendant had separated and recently had gotten back together. The stabbing occurred at the family home in the 5100 block of Dartmouth Avenue in the El Sereno section of Los Angeles on Aug. 20, 2004. Ipson said Santoyo had found that Roa had fathered a child with another woman while they were separated. He also has two children with his wife.

Ipson introduced evidence at the trial that a year before she killed her son, Santoyo was convicted of misdemeanor child abuse. The boy was placed in foster care. He was returned to his mother four days before she killed him.

Santoyo must serve at least 85 percent of the 26 years before she is eligible for a hearing on whether she ever will be paroled from prison.

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ATTN: Assignment Editors Re: Skid Row Drug Problem

October 3, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

District Attorney Steve Cooley and LAPD Chief William Bratton will hold a news conference at 2 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 3, to discuss an extraordinary new enforcement effort to curtail drug trafficking on Los Angeles Skid Row. LAPD Metropolitan Communications Dispatch Center, 111 N. Los Angeles St., third floor media room. Contact: For D.A., Sandi Gibbons or Jane Robison, 213-974-3528, or LAPD Press Relations, 213-485-3586.

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Charges Filed Against Members of Alleged Robbery Ring that Targeted Asian-Owned Businesses

October 4, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Six members of an alleged ring that authorities say preyed on Asian-owned businesses were charged today with robbery, bringing to nine the number of people charged in connection with the case, the District Attorney's office announced.

All six were scheduled to be arraigned later this afternoon in Division 30 of Los Angeles Superior Court. They were arrested earlier this week as part of a Los Angeles Police Department investigation into numerous robberies of Asian-owned businesses since mid-September.

Those charged today were arrested after a robbery early Monday at the Grasshopper Bar in Hollywood. Police said three men – two of them armed – and two women burst into the bar on Fountain Avenue shortly after 1 a.m. on Monday. They took money from the register and wallets of customers. They were arrested shortly after the holdup.

The three men charged yesterday were part of the same operation, authorities said. They were charged with five armed robberies in the Wilshire area on Sept. 30 and Oct. 1. They were arrested on Sunday following a robbery at Occidental Liquor on Beverly Boulevard.

Those charged today in case No. BA310265 were Andrew Smith, 18 (dob 10-8-1987); Lemarcus Funchess, 18 (dob 3-8-1988); Belma Brown, 20 (dob 4-4-1986); Earl Tyrone Harris, 19 (dob 12-27-1986); Joeisha Lanay Jefferson, 22 (dob 4-26-1984); and Chaunce Smith, 18 (dob 6-4-1988). They remain in custody on \$2 million bail each.

Charged yesterday in case No. BA310214 were Sam Demond Johnson, 36 (dob 4-26-1970); Christopher Antwon Govan, 19 (dob 6-19-1987); and

Cortderro Marcus Frazier, 18 (dob 5-1-1988).

All three were arraigned, pleaded not guilty and were ordered to return to court on Oct. 17 for a preliminary hearing. Each remains in custody on \$2 million bail.

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Former Baldwin Park Councilman Indicted on Charges of Misappropriation of Funds

October 5, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Former Baldwin Park Councilman William Van Cleave was arraigned today on a Los Angeles County Grand Jury indictment charging him with misappropriation of public funds.

The 51-year-old, who lost his bid for re-election in November 2005, was arrested yesterday by District Attorney investigators. He remains in custody on \$125,000 bail.

Deputy District Attorney Maureen O'Brien of the Public Integrity Division said Van Cleave pleaded not guilty to the five counts when he appeared before Superior Court Judge David S. Wesley late this morning.

Van Cleave is charged with misappropriating public funds between 2003 and 2005 while he served on the City Council. The indictment (BA320266) alleged that Van Cleave used public funds for such things as purchasing gasoline, renting cars, buying a telephone modem, paying for public storage and making miscellaneous public purchases.

The dollar amount was not listed in the indictment, which was returned Sept. 26 after the grand jury heard testimony from 10 witnesses. Although the indictment was unsealed when Van Cleave appeared for arraignment, the transcript of the grand jury hearing remains under seal until later this month.

Van Cleave's case was transferred to Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Ann I. Jones for trial. A pretrial hearing was scheduled for Oct. 13 and the case was set for trial on Nov. 30.

The case will be prosecuted by O'Brien. It was investigated by the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation.

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Teen Charged in Fatal Shooting of Toddler

October 12, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A 17-year-old reputed gang member has been charged with murder and attempted murder in the Sept. 24 fatal shooting of 3-year-old Kaitlyn Avila and her father in front of their Baldwin Village home, the District Attorney's office announced today.

Jonathan Banks, (dob 4-2-89), is scheduled to be arraigned today at the Foltz Criminal Justice Center, Div. 30, said Deputy District Attorney Dayan Mathai with the Hardcore Gang Division. He is being held on \$2 million bail.

Banks is charged in case No. BA 310467 with one count of murder and two counts of attempted murder with the special allegations of personal use of a firearm and to further a street gang. The co-defendant, Laron Lee Larrimore, (dob 3-3-80), pleaded not guilty on Wednesday to the same charges. He also is being held on \$2 million bail.

Banks and Larrimore allegedly shouted gang slogans before opening fire on Cesar Avila and his two daughters as they were getting out of their car in front of their home in the 4500 block of Pinafore Street. Banks allegedly jumped out the passenger side of a silver Chrysler and chased Avila on foot, shooting at and wounding the fleeing man. Banks then allegedly returned to Avila's vehicle, opened the rear door and fired inside. Kaitlyn was struck and killed. Her 6-year-old sister escaped without injury.

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Domestic Violence Hotline Begins Advertising Campaign

October 12, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Beginning this week, bus riders in some South Los Angeles County communities will see ads that say, “Home Shouldn’t Hurt,” and that give the toll free number for a 24-hour hotline for victims of domestic violence. The advertising campaign coincides with October being Domestic Violence Awareness Month.

The \$75,000 advertising campaign is a first for the Los Angeles County Domestic Violence Hotline, launched in 1994, said Carol Baker, head of the D.A.’s Community Relations Bureau. The billboard and bus shelter posters will be up through October.

While the Hotline serves callers in 11 languages, including English, Spanish, Tagalog, Khmer, Japanese, Thai, Armenian, Korean, Vietnamese, Mandarin and Cantonese, the pilot advertising campaign will be available in English and Spanish only. Baker said the D.A.’s office hopes to expand the advertising campaign later to include more areas in the county and in more languages.

The 24-hour Hotline, administered by the District Attorney’s Office, is a toll-free phone service that connects domestic violence victims with trained shelter personnel and/or victim advocates. The Hotline received an average of 394 calls a month during the first year it was introduced. Last year, more than 1,350 calls a month were received.

The advertising campaign to raise awareness for the Los Angeles County Domestic Violence Hotline is made possible by private donations and a grant by the Suicide Prevention Partnership, a national nonprofit organization.

Bus riders in Long Beach, Signal Hill, Paramount, South Los Angeles, Lynwood, South Gate and Downey will see posters on bus shelters, a

billboard and signs on buses alerting people that victims of violence can call the number -- 1-800-978-3600 -- 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

The Hotline aims to provide advocacy services to domestic violence victims and assist those who need an exit strategy or immediate shelter to those in danger by routing callers to an advocate according to the caller's location and/or language.

The Los Angeles County Domestic Violence Hotline costs nearly \$10,000 annually to operate and is funded by private donations. Donations from the public are welcome and can be made payable to the California Community Foundation at the following address: California Community Foundation, Attn: D.A. Victim and Crime Prevention Initiatives, 445 S. Figueroa St., 34th floor, Los Angeles, CA 90071.

Information on the Hotline is also available at the D.A.'s web site: www.da.lacounty.gov/domv.htm.

jr

CONTACT: Carol Baker or Suzanne Hazel, (213) 974-7401.

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District Attorney to Receive ABA Award for Public Service

October 12, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – District Attorney Steve Cooley will receive the American Bar Association's 2006 Hodson Award for Public Service on Friday in Denver.

Cooley will receive the award on behalf of the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office for the Juvenile Offender Intervention Network, or JOIN. The 14-year-old program provides swift intervention and accountability for children ages 10 to 17 years old who are first-time offenders who commit serious non-violent offenses. Youthful offenders are diverted to a hearing officer in the D.A.'s office as an alternative to juvenile court or formal prosecution.

"This has been a tremendously effective program. In addition to offering rehabilitation to young offenders who go through the program, it has provided millions of dollars in savings to taxpayers," Cooley said. "I'm grateful the American Bar Association deemed this program was worthy of national recognition."

Each successful JOIN case saves the justice system more than \$7,000 by avoiding trial costs for the courts, police, probation, defense and prosecution.

As of March 2005, more than 4,000 minors had successfully completed the JOIN program. By offering intervention before young offenders go to juvenile court, JOIN has a better than 85 percent success rate, reducing recidivism and ensuring that offenders pay restitution to victims.

Despite budgetary cutbacks early in his administration, Cooley felt so strongly he funded the program and expanded it countywide.

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Pasadena Man Sentenced to State Prison for Arson of JPL Satellite Dish

October 13, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

PASADENA – A Pasadena man who pleaded guilty to arson and was sentenced to a three-year state prison term for torching a prototype satellite dish at the Jet Propulsion Laboratory (JPL) faces a restitution hearing early next month, the District Attorney's office announced today.

The \$800,000 satellite dish on JPL property in Pasadena sustained a little more than \$180,300 in damage in the March 13, 2006, arson fire. The dish is a prototype being developed at JPL by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA).

Tyrone Willkerson, 49, was arrested on the grounds by Sheriff's deputies. He was charged on March 15 with one count each of arson to the property of another, vandalism with more than \$400 damage and possession of flammable materials. The other two counts were dismissed on Oct. 10 after Pasadena Superior Court Judge Fred J. Fukioka sentenced Willkerson to the state prison term. The restitution hearing will be in Fukioka's court on Nov. 3.

Investigators said Willkerson parked his car at nearby La Canada High School, cut through two fences and took apart a third to get into JPL's compound. They said he carried two gallon cans of flammable liquid, a bucket of rags, road flares and other materials onto JPL grounds and set the base of the satellite dish on fire. The dish sustained electrical and fiber optic cable damage before the fire could be extinguished, federal authorities said.

Willkerson was arrested by deputies from the Crescenta Valley Sheriff's Station. The case was investigated by the Sheriff's Arson/Explosives Detail and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) Office of Inspector General.

Deputy District Attorney Eric Levine of the Pasadena office prosecuted

Willkerson.

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ATTN: News & Assignment Editors RESCUE Youth Program Graduation

October 13, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

District Attorney Steve Cooley, Los Angeles County Fire Chief P. Michael Freeman, Long Beach Fire Chief David Ellis and Montebello Fire Chief Steve Huson (CQ) will honor 95 students who successfully completed the RESCUE youth mentoring program during a ceremony Sunday, Oct. 15, at Universal Studios.

The 14th annual ceremony will begin at 9 a.m. at Universal Studios, off the 101 Freeway and Lankershim Boulevard. Parking is available at the Frankenstein Parking Lot or Jurassic Parking Lot.

Nearly 230 firefighters also will be honored for mentoring the at-risk youth, who have had problems with school truancy and/or academic performance and are between the ages of 12 and 14 attending middle school.

This year, two graduates from previous classes will be recognized. Nathan Brumfield, a 2004 RESCUE graduate, recently became the first LAPD cadet in history to graduate first in academics and physical agility. Also scheduled to attend will be Yoan Leon, a 1996 RESCUE student who started his own truck maintenance company. Last year, he made his first \$1 million.

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D.A. Cooley & Fire Chiefs Honor Graduates of RESCUE Program

October 15, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

UNIVERSAL CITY – District Attorney Steve Cooley, Los Angeles County Fire Chief P. Michael Freeman, Long Beach Fire Chief David Ellis and Montebello Fire Chief Steve Huson (CQ) will honor 95 students who successfully completed the RESCUE youth mentoring program during the 14th annual ceremony Sunday.

Nearly 230 firefighters also will be honored for mentoring the at-risk youth, who have had problems with school truancy and/or academic performance and are between the ages of 12 and 14 attending middle school.

The 9 a.m. ceremony will be held at Universal Studios.

The District Attorney's RESCUE coordinators pair at-risk students with firefighter volunteers for an academic year mentorship. Firefighters work one-on-one with the students, teaching them life skills such as building confidence, discipline, and teamwork; and focusing on areas such as basic CPR, first aid, earthquake preparedness, knot tying and fire prevention techniques.

The RESCUE program is a partnership between the District Attorney's Bureau of Community Relations, and the Los Angeles County, Long Beach and Montebello fire departments.

This year, two graduates from previous classes will be recognized. Nathan Brumfield, a 2004 RESCUE graduate, recently became the first LAPD cadet in history to graduate first in academics and physical agility. Also scheduled to attend will be Yoan Leon, a 1996 RESCUE student. A few years ago, Yoan started his own truck maintenance company. Last year, he made his first \$1 million.

CONTACT: Angela Valenzuela, (213) 610-9324, or Carol Baker, (213) 713-2384.

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Man Charged with Murder in Beating of Clerk

October 17, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – A 32-year-old felon was charged today with one count of murder in Friday's fatal beating of a Chatsworth mini-mart clerk, the District Attorney's office announced.

Frank Erik Kaatz, (dob 12-7-73), is scheduled to be arraigned at 1:30 p.m. in San Fernando Superior Court, Dept. S. He is charged in case No. PA057525 with one count of premeditated murder with the special allegation that he used a deadly weapon, and one count of felony vandalism over \$400. He is being held on \$2,045,000 bail.

Kaatz allegedly smashed windows and furniture at his parents' home early Friday before going to the AM/PM mini-market in the 20400 block of Devonshire Street and beating the clerk, Hiran Ediriweera, in the head with the baseball bat. The victim, aka Rohan Rambukwella, died at the scene. Kaatz, who was convicted of attempted murder and robbery and sentenced to 14 years in state prison in 1994, was arrested on the roof of a nearby Denny's. If convicted, he's facing up to 84 years to life in prison as a "Third Striker."

Deputy District Attorney Tuppence Macintyre has been assigned to prosecute the case.

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Three Charged with Worker's Comp Insurance Fraud

October 18, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Three officers of a Chatsworth flooring installation company were arrested this morning on charges involving nearly \$11 million in worker's comp premium fraud, the District Attorney's office announced.

Arrested at their Northridge homes were Gad (Gadi) Leshem, president of Cover-All Inc., vice president Zeev Golan and his wife Irit Golan, who served as corporate secretary and payroll supervisor, said Deputy District Attorney Michael O'Gara with the Healthcare Fraud Division.

Cover-All Inc., which has corporate offices in Chatsworth, is in the business of installing carpeting and flooring as a subcontractor for businesses such as Home Depot. It has 50 offices in 17 states.

The three allegedly conspired to underreport the true amount of the company's payroll by more than \$31.8 million. By allegedly misrepresenting their total payroll, they were able to reduce their workers' comp premiums by more than \$10.9 million between September 2001 to April of 2006. The company allegedly has been underreporting payroll to the State Compensation Insurance Fund since the inception of its policy in September 2001. An investigation was initiated by the State Compensation Insurance Fund's Special Investigation Unit.

The three are charged in a felony complaint for arrest warrant (BA310759) with one count each of conspiracy and four counts each of insurance fraud with the special allegations that the fraud was more than \$2.5 million. They each are being held on \$6.5 million bail.

Arraignment for Zeev Golan, 54, is scheduled for Thursday at the Foltz Criminal Justice Center, Div. 30, sometime after 8:30 a.m., and Friday in the same courtroom for Leshem, 59. Arraignment information for Irit Golan, 52, is

not yet available.

If convicted, each is facing a maximum of 17 years in state prison.

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Actor Pleads No Contest to Misdemeanor DUI

October 19, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

GLENDALE – Actor Haley Joel Osment pleaded no contest today to one count of misdemeanor DUI and one count of misdemeanor possession of marijuana in the car, the District Attorney's office announced.

The 18-year-old actor was not present in court. His attorney, David Wood, asked a judge to advance the case and entered the plea on his behalf.

Glendale Superior Court Judge John Doyle sentenced Osment to 60 hours of alcohol rehab and education; ordered him to attend six months of AA meetings with a minimum of 26 meetings; and placed him on three years probation. Osment also was ordered to pay \$1,500 in fines and penalties.

Two other misdemeanor counts were dismissed.

Osment lost control of his 1995 Saturn on his way home in the La Canada area around 1 a.m. on July 20. The vehicle flipped over and Osment suffered a broken rib and a shoulder injury. His blood alcohol level measured .16 percent, twice the legal limit.

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Statement by District Attorney Steve Cooley Re: People vs. Weller

October 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

We are pleased the jury returned a guilty verdict on all counts as charged against Mr. Weller. We have always believed the difficult issues raised by this case needed to be aired in public and decided by a jury. This helps conclude a case that involved incredible human devastation and mayhem. We acknowledge the judge's responsibility to make the difficult sentencing decision.

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D.A. Recommendations on Welfare Fraud Detection Adopted by County Commission

October 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – District Attorney recommendations designed to detect and prevent child care fraud before it occurs have been adopted by the Citizens' Economy and Efficiency Committee in a recommendation to the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors.

The commission report was ordered by supervisors earlier this year after a Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury study cited the loss of millions of taxpayer dollars annually due to administrative failures by the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS).

District Attorney Steve Cooley said the commission adopted his main recommendation to establish an independent field visitation program to detect and prevent fraud at the child care application stage. The visitation program would be on a continuing basis after an applicant received a grant to ensure the program remains fraud-free.

"The best and most cost-effective way to prevent this fraud is to detect it during the verification process when an application is made to DPSS," Cooley said. "We investigate and prosecute hundreds of cases each year, but by the time they reach that stage, the damage already has been done."

The District Attorney noted that only last month, the last of 13 defendants charged in July 2005 in two criminal cases involving a combined loss of more than \$900,000 from the state child care program had pleaded guilty to grand theft and was sent to state prison. Eleven of the defendants received state prison terms and two received jail terms.

The longest term – seven years – was imposed against an Altadena woman whom prosecutors with the Welfare Fraud Division said set up a day-care business to care for children of those in the California Work Opportunity and

Responsibility to Kids (CalWORKS) Program. Assistance is given to parents who have to have someone care for their children while they participate in the program.

Other D.A. recommendations adopted by the commission including training to help DPSS and Alternate Payment Providers (APPs) detect and prevent fraud, and that the Board of Supervisors order various reviews of programs.

Using figures provided by the District Attorney's Office, the commission noted that between September 2004 and February 2006, there were 49 convictions for child care welfare fraud involving losses of a little more than \$3.4 million.

"This program is there for those who truly need it," Cooley said. "It is not a program for those who think they can make a quick illegal buck for themselves by cheating the taxpayers who fund the program and depriving legitimate recipients from getting the child care necessary to help them develop skills that ultimately will get them off the welfare rolls."

James Cospers, head deputy of the Welfare Fraud Division, and James Baker, assistant head deputy, provided information to the commission in connection with the report.

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Businessman Sent to Prison in Multi-Million-Dollar Gas Company Theft

October 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Huntington Park businessman was sentenced today to two years in state prison for his part in a multi-million-dollar theft of more than \$2.2 million from the Gas Company.

Deputy District Attorney Eugene Hanrahan of the Major Fraud Division said 69-year-old Joseph Pierro is the last defendant to be sentenced in the case. Five others previously were sentenced to terms ranging from six years in state prison to probation.

Pierro pleaded no contest earlier this year to grand theft and state tax evasion. Besides the prison term, Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Curtis Rappe ordered the defendant to pay restitution of \$436,228 to the Gas Company and \$99,108 to the California Franchise Board.

Hanrahan said Pierro is the president of IDI Technologies, which had done legitimate work for the Sempra Energy, the official name for the Gas Company. The prosecutor said Pierro gave kickbacks to the lead defendant in the case – Clarence Bonner – between 1996 and 1999. Pierro's wife also received a check from the money paid to IDI Technologies by the Gas Company, Hanrahan said. She originally was indicted with Bonner, her husband and four others. The case against her later was dismissed.

The case was filed in 2004 and the defendants indicted on various charges of grand theft and tax evasion in January 2005.

Bonner, a former right-of-way agent for the Gas Company, received the longest prison term – six years – and was ordered to make restitution of \$2.2 million to the Gas Company and \$176,589 to the Franchise Tax Board.

The District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation with the assistance of the

California Franchise Tax Board conducted the investigation.

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Transient Charged in Sexual Assault on 79-Year-Old Woman

October 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A transient who reportedly had been hired to do odd jobs for a 79-year-old Arleta woman was charged today with raping her at knifepoint, the District Attorney's office announced.

Jhony (cq) Enrique Irias, 28 (dob 2-8-1978), was charged in case No. PA 057559 with five counts of forcible rape and one count each of first-degree burglary and first-degree residential robbery in connection with the Oct. 14 attack at the woman's home. The complaint filed by Deputy District Attorney Angela Jordan alleged the defendant was armed with a palette knife during commission of the crimes. Bail was set at \$5.7 million.

Irias appeared briefly in San Fernando Superior Court late this afternoon. His arraignment was scheduled for Nov. 6 in Department S.

The defendant was arrested on Wednesday by Los Angeles police from the Foothill Division. If convicted, he faces life in prison with the possibility of parole.

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McKenna BMW Agrees to Injunction, Monetary Relief in Deceptive Practice Civil Lawsuit

October 24, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Norwalk auto dealer McKenna BMW has agreed to an injunction and more than \$650,000 in monetary relief as settlement of a deceptive practices civil lawsuit filed by the District Attorney's Consumer Protection Division, it was announced today.

The monetary relief includes up to \$406,908 in direct restitution to Los Angeles County consumers and \$247,350 in investigative costs and civil penalties.

The civil action alleging deceptive sales and leasing practices is one of a series of car dealership cases being handled by the Consumer Protection Division. The stipulated judgment was signed yesterday by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Judith C. Chirlin.

The Consumer Protection Division, working in conjunction with the Taskforce for Regional Autotheft Prevention (TRAP) and the Department of Motor Vehicles, investigated McKenna BMW as part of an on-going probe into several Los Angeles car dealerships. It was alleged that there were misrepresentations of charges for aftermarket products including key chains, BMW-logo pens, theft-etch services and warranty programs. As a result, large, undisclosed charges were built into transactions.

The lawsuit was filed against McKenna Motor Co. Inc., the parent firm also headquartered in Norwalk. The stipulated judgment was entered into without admissions of wrongdoing by the defendants.

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Editors – For further information, contact Deputy District Attorneys Dana Aratani, 231-580-3337, or Jeff McGrath, 213-580-3378. On behalf of

McKenna, contact Aaron H. Jacoby, 310-887-4420, attorney for the company.

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D.A.'s Office Wins Top County Excellence Award

October 25, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles County Quality and Productivity Commission today named the D.A.'s Fraud Interdiction Program as the Silver Eagle award winner in the 20th Annual Productivity and Quality Awards Program.

In 2004, District Attorney Steve Cooley launched a pilot program to more effectively investigate and prosecute health care fraud cases, which cost health insurers and government-funded health plans over \$100 billion nationally each year. In less than two years, the program has targeted more attorneys, medical doctors, chiropractors, dentists and clinic owners who have allegedly engaged in health care fraud. The program was designed and implemented by Deputy District Attorney Al MacKenzie, who has more than 30 years experience as a prosecutor.

The District Attorney's office also received two special awards, including "Best Application of Technology Award" for the D.A.'s Digital Archive Project, and the "Best Interagency Cooperation Award" for its work leading the Prop. 69 Implementation Task Force. MacKenzie also received a "Personal Best Award" for designing the Fraud Interdiction Program.

Since the program's inception, six of the most blatant abusers of health care insurance fraud have been convicted and sentenced to prison.

The most common health care fraud schemes include billing for services not rendered or medically unnecessary; double billing for services; and engaging in kickbacks.

This is the third year the District Attorney's office has received top honors from the county commission. Last year, the productivity commission named JOIN -- the District Attorney's juvenile offender program -- as Eagle Award winner, the top honor. The D.A.'s office also won the 2003 Bronze Award for

its participation in the Drug Endangered Child Response Team.

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ATTN: Assignment Editors
Re: Pv. Goodwin

October 26, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

Jury selection will not continue tomorrow in the Michael Goodwin trial in Pasadena. Instead, voir dire of prospective jurors continues at 10 a.m. on Monday, Oct. 30, in Department E, Pasadena Superior Court, 300 E. Walnut St. It is anticipated that a jury may be selected and opening statements may be made in the case late next week. An exact date for opening statements is not yet known. The Media Relations Calendar that just went out should be corrected to reflect this new information.

Contact: Sandi Gibbons, 213-974-3528.

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D.A. Honored with Public Service Award

October 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

BEVERLY HILLS – Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley will be honored tonight in Beverly Hills with the Public Service Award presented by the Los Angeles Commission on Assaults Against Women at the 35th Annual Humanitarian Awards Dinner.

The 7 p.m. dinner and awards' ceremony will be held at the Beverly Hills Hotel. Among the estimated 500 people to attend will be actors Calista Flockhart, LACAAW's national spokesperson, Harrison Ford, Christine Lahti, Harry Lennox, Doris Roberts and Noah Wylie.

Officials said Cooley was chosen to receive the Public Service Award based on his ongoing commitment to fighting domestic violence and child abuse, especially through his leadership to upgrade state and local crime labs with state-of-the-art DNA technology and his support of the DNA Victims' Bill of Rights. LACAAW, which is unveiling its new name "Peace Over Violence," has been helping to prevent violence in L.A. for more than 35 years. Last year, the non-profit group served 35,000 people, including 800 calls per month to its crisis intervention hotline.

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Capital Murder Charges Filed Against Man Accused of Killing Mother, Companion

October 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

WEST COVINA – Capital murder charges were filed by the District Attorney's Office today against a man accused of killing his mother and her companion at the couple's Glendora home earlier this week.

Robert Lee Lewis, 34 (dob 6-20-1972), is scheduled to appear for arraignment later today in Division 8 of Citrus Court in West Covina. He is charged in case No. KA076864 with two counts of murder and one count of second-degree robbery. It was alleged he used a handgun to fatally shoot the victims.

The complaint alleged the special circumstances of murder during a robbery and multiple murder. Although filed as a capital case, the District Attorney's Office will not decide on whether to seek the death penalty until after a preliminary hearing.

Glendora police arrested Lewis after the bodies of his mother, Pamela Dumais, 51, and her companion, Rodney Courtright, 52, were found Wednesday morning. Police went to the couple's home in the 900 block of Ivy Street in Glendora after co-workers called to say Dumais had not come to work as scheduled at 8 a.m.

Lewis was arrested at the home, authorities said. He remains in custody without bail.

The case was filed by Deputy District Attorney Robert F. Jordan Jr. of the West Covina office. It has not yet been assigned to a trial prosecutor.

Sheriff's homicide detectives conducted the murder investigation.

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Former Union Leader Convicted of Conspiracy, Perjury in Campaign Financing Case

October 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – The former president of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 99 was convicted today of two counts of conspiracy to violate state campaign laws and two counts of perjury in connection with a scheme to use union money to help finance the campaign of a former Los Angeles City Council member.

A Los Angeles Superior Court jury deliberated over two days before returning the verdicts late today against Janett Humphries, 64. Trial Judge Stephen A. Marcus allowed Humphries to remain free on her own recognizance pending sentencing, but ordered that she cannot attend any union function or social gathering.

Humphries was ordered to return to court on Nov. 15 for sentencing. Deputy District Attorney Max Huntsman, who successfully prosecuted the case, said she faces a possible maximum state prison term of three years and eight months.

The jury convicted Humphries of one count each of conspiracy to exceed a \$500 campaign contribution limit and to conceal campaign contributions. The jury found true the overt acts on each of the conspiracy counts, which cover a period between August 2002 and October 2003. The jury also convicted her of two counts of perjury. All charges are felonies.

Humphries and Martin Ludlow, 41, were charged by state and federal prosecutors in early March of this year in connection with a scheme to embezzle money from SEIU Local 99 to finance Ludlow's successful Los Angeles City Council campaign.

He was elected to the council in 2003, but resigned last year to head the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor. He later resigned that post, citing the

investigations that ultimately led to criminal charges against him and Humphries.

Ludlow pleaded in both the state and federal cases. He is on probation. Humphries pleaded not guilty in both cases. Her federal case is pending.

Huntsman, with the Public Integrity Division, prosecuted both defendants.

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Man Convicted of Second-Degree Murder in Fatal Traffic Collision in Lancaster

October 30, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LANCASTER – An Antelope Valley jury deliberated about four hours today before convicting a man of second-degree murder and other felony charges stemming from a 2004 collision that claimed the life of a Lancaster woman.

Deputy District Attorney Sun Chung said Christopher Jon Martinez, 42, is scheduled to be sentenced on Dec. 14 by Superior Court Judge Carlos Chung (no relation), who presided over the 13-day trial. Martinez, of Lancaster, faces a sentence of life in prison with the possibility of parole.

Besides the murder charge, the jury also convicted the defendant of one count of gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated and two counts of driving under the influence (DUI) with injury. The jury also found true the allegations the defendant had two prior DUI convictions, the prosecutor said.

The prosecutor said 48-year-old Vanessa Ashford Wiley was killed shortly after 8 a.m. on Aug. 25, 2004, when her vehicle was struck by an SUV being driven by Martinez. The collision occurred at Avenue K and 40th Street West in Lancaster.

Martinez, who had two friends with him, was westbound on Avenue K and ran a red light at the intersection of 40th Street West, the prosecutor said. She said the victim's vehicle was southbound on 40th Street West.

The two friends riding with Martinez suffered serious injury. The driver suffered minor injuries, the prosecutor said. He was arrested at Antelope Valley Medical Center and has remained in custody since then.

Wiley was the mother of four adult children and the grandmother of two. She also had 10 brothers and sisters, the prosecutor said.

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Rafael Perez Pleads No Contest to Perjury

October 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

TORRANCE – Rafael Antonio Perez, the disgraced former Los Angeles police officer whose disclosures sparked what became known as the Rampart Police Division Scandal, pleaded no contest today to one felony count of perjury.

Perez, 39, entered the plea before Torrance Superior Court Judge William Hollingsworth, said Deputy District Attorney Steven Schreiner. He is scheduled to be sentenced Nov. 30 in Dept. L.

Perez was arrested in July by investigators for the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) as he was visiting his federal parole officer in Inglewood, authorities said. Perez, who legally changed his name to Ray Lopez, pleaded no contest to lying in his application for a California driver's license on June 30, 2005.

Perez was working with the Los Angeles Police Department's anti-gang CRASH unit in the Rampart Division when he was arrested and charged in connection with stealing cocaine from the LAPD's evidence locker. He pleaded guilty in 2000 to one count of grand theft and one count of possession of cocaine for sale. He was sentenced in 2001 to five years in state prison, then prosecuted in U.S. District Court for violating the civil rights of a suspect who was shot by police. Perez also pleaded guilty in that case and in 2002, received a two-year federal prison sentence.

Schreiner said Perez is scheduled to be sentenced to three years probation and 300 hours of community service for his plea on the perjury charge.

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Man Charged with Capital Murder in Fatal Shootings of Stepdaughters

September 5, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles man was charged with capital murder today in connection with the fatal shooting of his adult stepdaughters at a weekend birthday party for one of the victims.

Robert Lee Phillips, 59 (dob 4-18-1947), is scheduled to appear for arraignment tomorrow in Division 30 of Los Angeles Superior Court. He is charged in case No. BA308582 with two counts of murder with the special circumstance of multiple murder. The complaint alleged the defendant used a handgun to commit the crimes.

Phillips also is charged with two counts of attempted murder of a third woman at the party on Saturday at the family's home on West 84th Place.

Arrested shortly after the shooting, Phillips is being held without bail. Although filed as a capital case, the District Attorney's office will not make a determination on whether to see the death penalty until the defendant is ordered to stand trial.

Authorities said the party was at the house Phillips shares with his wife, the dead victims' mother. The younger of the two, Sabrina, was celebrating her 30th birthday. The other sister, Charlotte, was 33. Neither lived at home.

Deputy District Attorney Kendra Carman of the Family Violence Division was assigned to prosecute the case.

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Alleged Gang Member Charged with Murdering Woman Killed in Pasadena Police Shootout

September 6, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

PASADENA – An alleged gang member was charged today with the murder of his woman companion, who was fatally wounded during a shootout with police in Pasadena on Sunday.

Walter Jesus Villanueva, 23 (dob 4-23-1983), of Altadena is expected to appear this afternoon in Department D of Pasadena Superior Court for arraignment on the case (GA066913). Bail was recommended at \$6 million.

Villanueva was charged with murdering Erica Hindman, 21, a passenger in his car during the shootout on Sunday. He also was charged with four counts of attempted murder, one count of assault with a firearm on a peace officer, one count of shooting at an inhabited dwelling, one count of shooting at an occupied motor vehicle, four counts of assault with a firearm and one count of possession of a firearm by a felon with one prior. The complaint alleged personal use of a handgun to commit the crimes and also included allegations that the crimes were street gang-related.

If convicted, Villanueva faces life in prison with the possibility of parole. Bail was recommended at \$6 million.

The complaint alleged a prior conviction of unlawful possession of a vehicle (KA066752) in 2004.

Hindman, 21, of Pasadena was a passenger in Villanueva's car. She was shot in the head after police responded to shooting call about 1 a.m. on North Marengo Avenue in Pasadena. Villanueva was arrested after a short pursuit to Grandview Street, where he was taken into custody, authorities said. Hindman was taken to Huntington Memorial Hospital, where she died.

Deputy District Attorney Martin Bean of the Hardcore Gang Division will prosecute the case.

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Retired Assistant Bureau Director Florence Linn Dies

September 12, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

Memo from Steve Cooley, District Attorney

We are deeply saddened to inform you of the recent passing of our friend, former colleague and historic figure, Florence Linn. Florence was 82.

Florence was born and raised in Los Angeles. Her father was a deputy district attorney, and it is said that Florence heard her first closing argument in a murder case at the age of eight. Florence did not have any brothers and claimed it was her father's plan that she become a prosecutor. She attended USC and graduated at 21 with a JD degree after completing an accelerated law program.

Florence was appointed as a deputy district attorney on December 3, 1947. She was the only woman among 60 male deputy district attorneys. Florence was assigned to the Failure to Provide Division which prosecuted what were then referred to as "lazy" dads. Upon conviction, these defendants were often sentenced to the County chain gang. Within a short time, Florence rose to the rank of Chief of the Failure to Provide Division. There she handled the first "reciprocal support" case the office had ever prosecuted.

In the 1950s, Florence Linn was the first female prosecutor to try a rape case in Los Angeles County. She also tried many high-profile abortion cases. In 1965, the Los Angeles Times noted that she had prosecuted more felony cases than any other woman in the United States. In a 1985 interview, Florence said that early in her career she had to search to find a judge willing to allow a woman to do trials in superior court.

During her career, Florence experienced the great diversity of the office's assignments. She was assigned to the Juvenile Division, Trials Division, and Complaints Division. In 1968 she was appointed the first female Head

Deputy. She supervised the Santa Monica Branch Office and Research and Training Division. Later she served as the Assistant Director for the Bureau of Special Operations, Central Operations as well as Branch and Area Operations. When she retired in 1991 after a distinguished 43-year career, Florence was serving as the Special Assistant to District Attorney Ira Reiner.

Truly a legend and pioneer, Florence will be remembered for her strength, wisdom, courage, and humor.

A memorial service for Ms. Linn will be held:

Wednesday, September 13, 2006 - 1 :00 p.m.
Forest Lawn Glendale
1 7 1 2 South Glendale Avenue, Glendale
Freedom Mausoleum
Columbarium of Understanding

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Los Angeles Police Officer Convicted in Off-Duty Shooting

September 12, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles police officer was convicted today of firing shots at a friend's house in Inglewood a year ago after the two had a falling out.

Deputy District Attorney Margo Baxter of the Justice System Integrity Division said 41-year-old Keely Caroline Coleman faces a maximum of 22 years and four months in state prison for the Aug. 30, 2005, shooting in Inglewood.

Coleman, who was relieved of duty after the shooting, was remanded into custody by trial judge Barbara R. Johnson after the verdicts were returned this afternoon in Los Angeles Superior Court. Sentencing was scheduled for Oct. 12.

Baxter said that the jury, after a day of deliberation, convicted the defendant of two counts of assault with a semiautomatic firearm and one count of shooting at an inhabited dwelling. The jury found that the defendant used a semiautomatic firearm to commit the crimes.

The jury deadlocked on two counts of attempted murder, voting 11 to one for guilt, Baxter said.

The shooting occurred at the Inglewood home of a woman friend of Coleman's. Neither the friend nor a man who was in the home helping the other victim install electrical equipment was injured in the shooting. Both dropped to the floor when they heard shots.

Coleman had been free on her own recognizance during the trial. She was arrested a day after the shooting.

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Broker Deemed Sane; Sentenced to Life Term for Murdering Wife

September 12, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

PASADENA – A brokerage executive was sentenced to a 55-year-to-life prison term today after a jury in Pasadena determined he was sane last year when he shot and killed his wife at their Arcadia home.

Deputy District Attorney Maribelle Estrella said after the jury found that 51-year-old Richard Robert Russo was sane at the time he killed his wife, the defense requested an immediate sentence.

Prior to sentencing, Estrella read a statement from the family of victim Carmen Russo:

“A year ago, our beloved daughter, Carmen, was murdered by this monster, leaving our two grandchildren motherless. Our son lost his only sibling and we lost our only daughter.

“Justice has been finally served today in our legal system. Thank you from our broken, but grateful, hearts.

“Our respect and our utmost gratitude go to (Deputy) District Attorney Mari Estrella, Detective Bill Walton and all the peace officers of the Arcadia Police Department who participated in this investigation.

“Judge Michelle Rosenblatt, it is our hope that you will sentence this monster, Richard Russo, to the maximum sentence allowed by the state of California without any chance of parole.”

Trial judge Rosenblatt sentenced Russo to 25 years to life for first-degree murder and 25-years to life for personally using a handgun to kill his wife. Russo also was convicted of two counts of child endangerment. He was sentenced to four years on that count and another year for using a gun. The

sentence on the other child endangerment count was run concurrently for a total sentence of 55 years to life in state prison.

Russo must serve at least 85 percent of that time before he is eligible for a parole hearing.

The defendant was convicted of first-degree murder by the jury on Aug. 31. But since the defendant also claimed to be insane at the time of the murder, a second phase of the trial – the sanity phase – was held before the same jury. The jury was out about a day before returning its verdict late yesterday. The verdict was read today and sentence imposed.

Russo shot and killed his wife at the family home in Arcadia on Aug. 29, 2005. Police arrived at the house in answer to a 911 call. Russo barricaded himself in the home overnight with the couple's two children. He surrendered the next day and has remained in custody since that time.

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ATTN: News & Assignment Editors Re: Joint Sheriff/LAPD Crime Lab Completion

September 13, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley, Sheriff Lee Baca and LAPD Chief William Bratton will hold a press conference at 11:30 a.m. Thursday, Sept. 14, to discuss the upcoming completion next spring of the joint Sheriff/LAPD crime lab and to discuss the current backlog of 300,000 untested DNA samples at the state's DNA data bank.

The press conference will be held at California State University, Los Angeles, on the first floor of the Golden Eagle Ballroom, 5151 State University Drive.

The press conference will be held during a break in the Fifth Annual 2006 DNA Awareness Forum. CSULA is the future home of the Los Angeles Regional Crime Laboratory Facility set to open its doors in April 2007.

The forum for law enforcement officers, victim advocates, health care providers, attorneys and criminalists will include an awards ceremony at noon to recognize achievements in raising awareness on advances in DNA technology.

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Former King/Drew Radiologist Charged with Tax Evasion

September 13, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A former radiologist at King/Drew Medical Center was charged today with failing to pay state taxes for 2004 when he worked at the county hospital in South Los Angeles.

Deputy District Attorney Juliet Schmidt of the Public Integrity Division said Dr. Harold Austin Tate, 46 (dob 1-23-1960), was charged with one felony count in case No. BA 309062. Bail was recommended at \$20,000.

Schmidt said she had been in contact with Tate's attorney and the doctor, who lives in Las Vegas, is expected to appear for arraignment on Oct. 3 in Division 30 of Los Angeles Superior Court.

Tate is charged with one count of failure to file a return for 2004, a violation of Section 19706 of the California Revenue and Taxation Code. The complaint did not state the amount allegedly owed the state. A conviction carries a possible three-year maximum state prison term.

The Public Integrity Division began its investigation after the Audit and Compliance Division of the Department of Health Services referred the matter amid allegations Tate reported working more hours at King/Drew than he actually did.

Tate was employed by Reliable Health Care Services of Culver City. The County of Los Angeles contracted with Reliable to provide specialty services at King/Drew. Although Tate worked at the medical center, he was paid by Reliable.

The investigation showed that the hospital required its radiologists to reside on-site on a 24-hour basis. Hospital officials also reported that the productivity of Tate, who worked at King/Drew from 1999 to 2005, was higher

than any of the other radiologists. The investigation also showed his time cards were approved by the appropriate hospital personnel.

Although no criminal charges stemmed from the inquiry into the hours that Tate worked, the investigation by the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation and the California Franchise Tax Board resulted in the case filed today.

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Joint Statement On State DNA Backlog

September 14, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

“We’re here today to celebrate the Fifth Annual DNA Awareness Week and advances in DNA analysis. Those of us in law enforcement recognize what a powerful tool it can be in the fight against crime.

Many good things are happening. We look forward to the completion of the Los Angeles Regional Crime Laboratory Facility, which is set to open in May 2007.

The overwhelming passage of Proposition 69 in 2004 was a significant public safety victory for all residents of California. Proposition 69 is the best all-felon database law in the country. It provides an opportunity to solve old cases and prevent the commission of the most serious of crimes by repeat or serial offenders.

Throughout the state, prosecutors, police, the courts, the Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, probation departments and others have more than risen to the challenge of Proposition 69 in the collection of offender samples. Early, optimistic goals have been surpassed with 400,000 samples having been collected from convicted felons.

Unfortunately for the victims of crime, testing of those DNA samples is seriously lagging. More than 300,000 DNA samples represent a chronic backlog that is due in large part to critical staffing shortages at the California Department of Justice lab.

We urge the governor and state lawmakers to address this urgent public safety issue.”

Steve Cooley, Los Angeles County District Attorney

Lee Baca, Los Angeles County Sheriff

William Bratton, Los Angeles Police Chief

Tony Rackauckas, Orange County District Attorney

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Former Police Officer Sentenced to Six Years in Prison for Assaulting Girlfriend

September 14, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

ALHAMBRA – A former Los Angeles police officer was sentenced today to six years in state prison for physically assaulting his girlfriend last year.

Deputy District Attorney Renee Cartaya of the Justice System Integrity Division said 34-year-old Victor Pallares was sentenced by Alhambra Superior Court Judge Charles C. Lee.

A jury convicted Pallares in July of one count of assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury. The jury deadlocked on one count of false imprisonment by violence. It found him not guilty of one count each of corporal injury to a cohabitant and assault with intent to commit a felony.

The false imprisonment charge was not retried. It was dismissed.

Pallares was arrested by Alhambra police who responded to a May 22, 2005, 911 call from the victim. The beating occurred at the defendant's home in Alhambra.

The defendant was held on \$260,000 bail. Authorities said he had left the employ of Los Angeles Police Department around the time the assault occurred.

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Pastor Charged with Molesting Two Girls

September 18, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – A 46-year-old Sunland pastor was charged today with multiple counts of sexually molesting two young girls who attended his church, the District Attorney's office announced.

Joseph Gary Torres, (dob 12-9-59), is charged in case No. PA057295. He is scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in San Fernando Superior Court, Dept. S, said Deputy District Attorney Carolyn McNary. He is being held on \$2 million bail.

Torres is charged with 11 counts of sexual molestation, including continuous sexual abuse, oral copulation and sodomy by force. The first victim was 12 when the alleged molestation began in July 2000 and continued to August. The second victim was 14 when the alleged abuse began in July 2005 and also allegedly continued through August. Torres allegedly met the victims who attended his church, Iglesia Bautista Reformada in Sunland.

If convicted, he faces up to 30 years in state prison.

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Assistant Football Coach Pleads Guilty to Falsifying Records

September 19, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

BELLFLOWER – A former Cerritos College assistant football coach charged with securing more than \$150,000 in federal grants for football players who were ineligible for financial aid pleaded guilty today, the District Attorney's office announced.

Patrick Callahan, 58, pleaded guilty before Bellflower Judge Leland Tipton to an amended felony count of falsifying government documents, said Deputy District Attorney Leonard Torrealba with the Public Integrity Division. Sentencing is scheduled for Oct. 27 in Bellflower Superior Court, Dept. 3.

Callahan admitted fraudulently obtaining federal financial aid grant money for 13 football players to play at the junior college between July 1999 and March 2004. In some cases, Callahan, who had been an assistant coach at Cerritos College for 16 years, submitted fraudulent statements from players that they were living independently from their parents so that they could qualify for financial aid. In other cases, he modified enrollment applications from out-of-state players to indicate California residency.

"He took what should have been a positive situation for students, and taught them how to cheat and break the law," Torrealba said. "Not only was he teaching students how to cheat, he was saying it was okay. It became a pattern of rationalization that they needed to do this to compete and win. It was a suspension of morality."

The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Inspector General.

Under the terms of negotiated plea, Callahan must resign his post at Cerritos College. Since his arrest last year, he was working as coordinator of student activities in the Office of Judicial Affairs at the college.

He also must repay \$70,758 to the U.S. Department of Education and \$20,799 to Cerritos College, Torrealba said. He is scheduled to be sentenced to a suspended two-year term in prison and five years formal probation. He also is scheduled to be sentenced to 90 days in county jail.

Callahan, who arrested Aug. 1, 2005 at his Artesia home, was originally charged with 13 counts of conspiracy and 13 counts of grand theft. In exchange for his plea, the remaining 26 counts will be dismissed.

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Sylmar High Assistant Coach Charged with Sexual Assault

September 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – An assistant soccer coach at Sylmar High School has been charged with multiple counts of sexual assault and sexual molestation, the District Attorney's office announced today.

Eduardo Colocho, 27 (dob 11-24-78), is scheduled to be arraigned on Oct. 5 in San Fernando Superior Court, Dept. S, said Deputy District Attorney Ryann Gerber, who is assigned to prosecute the case. The Sylmar resident made his first appearance in court on Monday and had his arraignment rescheduled for Oct. 5. He is being held on \$3 million bail.

Colocho, who has worked at Sylmar High for six years as an assistant coach and office worker, allegedly sexually molested nine boys between the ages of 14 and 17. The sexual assaults and molestation allegedly occurred between April 2003 and this month. LAPD began investigating the case after one alleged victim told a sibling, who told a teacher.

Colocho is charged in case No. PA057296 with one count of sodomy of an unconscious victim, three counts of sodomy of a person under 18, four counts of oral copulation of a person under 18, seven counts of using a minor for sex, all felonies. He also is charged with two misdemeanor counts of child molestation. If convicted, he faces up to 18 years in state prison.

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Man Charged in Alleged Attack on Radio Reporter

September 25, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A man accused of attacking a KABC Radio reporter outside a charter school in Boyle Heights was charged today with felony assault and robbery, the District Attorney's office announced.

Ramon Flores, 31 (dob 3-4-1975), of Boyle Heights, is scheduled to appear for arraignment this afternoon in Division 30 of Los Angeles Superior Court. He is charged in case No. BA309649 with one count each of assault with a deadly weapon – an automobile – and second-degree robbery.

Flores was arrested on Sept. 21 by officers from the Los Angeles Police Department's Hollenbeck Division, which was investigating the June 1 attack against reporter Sandy Wells. Wells had gone to the Academia Semillas del Pueblo Charter School to interview an administrator. There had been news stories on KABC and in other media about the school, its programs and its education philosophies.

Authorities said Flores was dropping off a child at the school, spotted the reporter and chased Wells with the defendant's rather distinctive Dodge Magnum vehicle. Wells allegedly had to jump out of the way. Eventually, there was a confrontation on the street that resulted in the tape cassette being taken out of the recorder.

Flores was arrested after one of the detectives working on the case saw a vehicle and driver matching the description of the attacker at the school last week.

The defendant has remained in custody on \$80,000 bail since his arrest. If convicted, he faces a possible maximum state prison term of six years in state prison.

A prosecutor has not yet been assigned to the case, which was filed by

Deputy District Attorney Joseph D. Shidler of the Central Complaints Division.

sg

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Man Accused of Dragging Death of Dog Charged with Animal Cruelty, DUI

September 25, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – A Sunland man who allegedly dragged his dog to death after it jumped out of his truck was charged today with felony animal cruelty and driving under the influence, the District Attorney's office announced.

Julio Humberto Perez, 40 (dob 4-12-1966), was expected to be arraigned tomorrow in San Fernando Superior Court. He was charged today in case No. PA057367 with two felony DUI counts and two felony counts of cruelty to an animal. The complaint listed three prior DUI convictions between 1997 and 2004.

Authorities said Perez was arrested yesterday after his German shepherd was dragged to death when it jumped from the bed of the defendant's truck. The dog was attached to the truck by a metal cord tied to his collar and was dragged at speeds up to 50 mph, authorities said.

After his passenger and witnesses yelled at the defendant, he eventually stopped and put the dog in his truck before police arrived. Authorities said the defendant was arrested at his home, where he was sleeping in a closet. He remains in custody.

The court was asked to set bail at \$120,000. If convicted, Perez faces a maximum of more than four years in state prison.

The case was handled by the Los Angeles Police Department's Valley Traffic Division. Deputy District Attorney Susan D. Mills of the San Fernando office filed the case. It has not yet been assigned to a prosecutor.

Perez is expected to be arraigned in Department S of San Fernando Superior Court.

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Ricky Manning Pleads in Assault Case

September 26, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Chicago Bears cornerback Ricky Manning Jr. pleaded no contest today to assault in connection with the April 23 attack of a man in a Denny's restaurant, the District Attorney's office announced.

Manning, 25, entered the plea to the felony assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury before Airport Superior Court Judge James Brandlin, said Deputy District Attorney Hamid Towfigh. He was immediately sentenced to three years formal probation and ordered to attend 52 weeks of anger management. He also was ordered to complete 100 hours of community service with a municipality or public agency or a nationally recognized philanthropic organization not associated with his football team.

Should he violate his probation or commit any new offenses he is facing four years in state prison, Towfigh said.

Manning was with two other former UCLA football players -- Maurice Drew, 21, and Tyler Ebell, 23 -- when Manning allegedly exchanged words with a customer in a Denny's in Westwood in the early morning hours on April 23. Manning assaulted the victim before leaving the restaurant. He was arrested by LAPD officers a short time later.

The assault charge was dismissed in June against Drew for insufficient evidence. On Sept. 12, Judge Amy Hogue reduced the felony assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury charge against Ebell to a misdemeanor. His case was referred to the City Attorney's Office for prosecution.

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Program to Combat Skid Row Problems Launched

September 26, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – The District Attorney's office, LAPD and the Los Angeles County Probation Department have launched an innovative program to help combat serious drug problems along downtown's Skid Row, the District Attorney's office announced today.

Drug sales and drug use have exploded in the Los Angeles Police Department's Central Division, an area between 4th and 6th Streets bounded by Broadway and Central. In 2005, LAPD officers arrested nearly 2,400 people on narcotics charges in the Skid Row area known as the 5th Street Corridor. That figure represents 6.9 percent of all citywide drug arrests. Those arrests occur within an area that's only .14 of a square mile, officials said.

"Drug buyers and sellers know where to go to do business in the City of Los Angeles – downtown Skid Row," District Attorney Steve Cooley said. "The area is being overrun by drug deals."

To help cut down on drug traffic in the area, officials from the D.A.'s office, LAPD, the Probation Department and the Superior Courts developed a program to bar people convicted of drug offenses from returning to the 5th Street Corridor while they're on probation. Known as "stay away" orders, the orders issued by a judge during sentencing would not apply to residents who live, work or who go for treatment in the targeted area.

It is the first time prosecutors have sought conditions on probation for narcotics offenses that target such a narrowly defined area, said Janet Moore, director of the Central Operations in the D.A.'s office.

To ensure effective monitoring of the stay away orders issued, the county Probation Department has assigned a probation officer to work with the Los Angeles Police Department's Central Division to enforce this and other

conditions of probation.

Cooley said if the program is effective, the D.A.'s office would review expanding it countywide to target other similarly impacted areas.

"We are proud of our work with the LAPD, the Probation Department and the courts to attack this public safety concern," Cooley said. "This is an innovative program that we hope makes a real difference to residents in downtown Los Angeles."

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Two Charged with Capital Murder in Fatal Shooting of Off-Duty Sheriff's Deputy

September 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LONG BEACH – Two men were charged today with the capital murder of off-duty Sheriff's Deputy Maria Cecilia Rosa, who was gunned down in Long Beach earlier this year in an alleged robbery attempt.

Frank Christopher Gonzalez, 26 (dob 5-17-1980), and Justin Ashley Flint, 20 (dob 9-23-1986), were scheduled to appear for arraignment around 3 p.m. today in Department J of Long Beach Superior Court, 415 W. Ocean Blvd.

The men were charged in case No. NA071779 with one count of murder with the special circumstance of robbery. The complaint alleged personal use of handgun against both defendants.

The men also were charged with one count of attempted robbery. The gun use allegations also were charged in the attempted robbery count.

The complaint alleged prior convictions this year for both defendants; Gonzalez on a weapons case (NA069814) and Flint on a robbery case (NA069877).

Although charged as a capital murder case, the District Attorney's office will not decide until closer to trial whether to seek the death penalty against either or both defendants. Both are in custody without bail.

Deputy Rosa was shot and killed around 6 a.m. in the 2900 block of South Eucalyptus Avenue in Long Beach. She had been visiting a woman friend – a Sheriff's detective – and was leaving when shot to death in the driveway of the home.

The 30-year-old deputy had been assigned to the Sheriff's Inmate Reception Center at the downtown Los Angeles Central Jail.

The criminal complaint filed today culminated an intensive investigation by Long Beach Police detectives.

The case will be prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Patrick E. Connolly of the Long Beach office.

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State Fire Captain Charged with 22-Year-Old Torrance KFC Murder

September 28, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A capital murder indictment against a state fire captain was unsealed today after the defendant was arraigned in connection to the fatal stabbing of a Torrance Kentucky Fried Chicken restaurant assistant manager during an attempted robbery 22 years ago.

William Charles Marshall, 45 (dob 12-12-1960), was indicted late yesterday by the Los Angeles County Grand Jury on one count of murder with the special circumstance of murder during an attempted robbery. It was alleged the defendant used a knife to fatally stab 21-year-old Robin Lucille Hoynes sometime between Oct. 30 and Oct. 31, 1984.

He was arrested this morning in Riverside County by Torrance police detectives. Marshall, of Mountain Center, works for the state Department of Forestry and Fire Service. The defendant appeared this afternoon before Los Angeles Superior Court Judge David S. Wesley for arraignment.

He pleaded not guilty and the case was transferred to the court of Superior Judge Mark Arnold in Torrance for trial. A pre-trial hearing was scheduled in Torrance for Oct. 3.

Marshall is being held without bail. The District Attorney's office will not decide until closer to trial whether to seek the death penalty.

The one-count indictment (BA320267) also noted a prior residential burglary conviction for Marshall. That conviction on a 1988 Long Beach case resulted in a prison term for the defendant.

Deputy District Attorneys John Lewin and Ricardo Ocampo of the Major Crimes Division said the Torrance police cold case unit took a new look at the murder starting about two years ago. All the evidence was re-examined and

witnesses re-interviewed.

Marshall had been questioned at the time of the killing. He was a former assistant manager at the KFC near the Hollywood Rivera in Torrance and had worked with the murder victim. He had been terminated by KFC only days before the killing.

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Woman Convicted of Murdering Her 10-Year-Old Son

September 29, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles woman was convicted by a jury today of murdering her 10-year-old son two years ago following an argument with the boy's father.

Deputy District Attorney Steven Ipson of the Family Violence Division said the jury deliberated about a day and a half before convicting 30-year-old Rocio Santoyo of one count of first-degree murder with the use of a knife. The defendant faces a 26-year-to-life prison term when she returns to court on Oct. 3 for sentencing by Superior Court Judge David M. Mintz.

The jury convicted Santoyo of stabbing her only son, Solomon, in the throat on Aug. 20, 2004, after arguing with the boy's father, Walter Roa. It appeared she blindfolded the boy before killing him. The stab wound was in the boy's jugular.

The murder occurred at the family home in the 5100 block of Dartmouth Avenue in the El Sereno section of Los Angeles. Ipson introduced evidence at the trial that the defendant was upset with Roa because she learned he had a child in connection with an affair with another woman while the two were separated. Roa also has two other children with his wife.

Evidence introduced at the trial showed that after killing her son, Santoyo, wrote a message on the wall to Roa that read, in part, "Now you only have three children."

Ipson also introduced evidence at the trial that the defendant was convicted of misdemeanor child abuse the year before. He said testimony was that the woman beat the boy because he lost some sweaters. The boy was placed in foster care. But he was returned to his mother four days before she killed him.

Santoyo has remained in jail on \$1 million bail since her arrest two years ago.

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Man Charged in Bell Starbucks Barricade

August 1, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

DOWNEY – Kidnapping and other felony charges were filed today against a 21-year-old man who allegedly barricaded himself in a Starbucks in Bell late Sunday night following a robbery at a nearby hotel.

Julio Antonio Cano (Dob 9-28-1984), who listed a Bakersfield address when arrested by Bell police early Monday morning, was scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in Division 7 of Los Angeles Superior Court in Downey. He was charged in case No. VA096547 with one count each of kidnapping to commit robbery, first-degree residential burglary, first-degree residential robbery, making criminal threats, possession of a firearm by a felon and possession of ammunition.

If convicted, Cano faces a possible maximum state prison term of life with the possibility of parole. Bail was recommended at \$7.6 million.

Bell police arrested Cano about 6 a.m. yesterday after a SWAT team fired a tear gas canister into the Starbucks where the defendant allegedly holed up after the robbery Sunday night. Police said a man at the Bell Manor Hotel on Florence Avenue said his wallet was stolen by a gunman. Police searched and followed Cano to the Starbucks at Florence and Atlantic avenues.

He barricaded himself in a restroom and was arrested after employees and customers were evacuated safely, authorities said.

The case was filed by Deputy District Attorney David Cheng of the Downey office. The complaint alleged prior convictions in Long Beach in 2005 of arson of an inhabited structure and making a criminal threat (case no. NA066457).

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Attorney Arrested, Charged with Embezzling from Clients

August 1, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles attorney who allegedly embezzled more than \$300,000 from six clients -- including a woman with breast cancer who lost her apartment as a result -- was arrested today on a felony warrant, the District Attorney's office announced.

Mervyn Hillard Wolf, 67 (7-3-39), was arrested by investigators with the D. A.'s Bureau of Investigation. He is charged in case No. BA300050 with six counts of grand theft and one count of bouncing a check, all felonies, said Deputy District Attorney Mark Ashen, assistant head deputy of the Justice System Integrity Division.

From June 2003 to June 2004, Wolf allegedly represented six clients in personal injury, workers' compensation and wrongful termination lawsuits. In all six cases, Wolf allegedly deposited settlement checks into his clients' trust accounts, and then embezzled from those accounts.

In one case, Wolf allegedly embezzled \$25,000 from a client on permanent disability with breast cancer. The workers' compensation money was suppose to cover his client's living expenses. Instead, on July 1, 2004, Wolf allegedly bounced a \$1,801 check to pay for rent, and as a result, the woman was evicted from her apartment and forced to live in an assisted living facility.

Wolf is scheduled to be arraigned Thursday in Los Angeles Superior Court, Division 30. He was being held on \$298,000 bail. If convicted, he faces up to nine years in state prison. DDA Shannon Presby has been assigned the case.

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Actor Charged with Misdemeanor DUI

August 2, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

MALIBU – Actor Mel Gibson was charged today with misdemeanor driving under the influence, the District Attorney's office announced.

Gibson, 50, (dob 1-3-56), was charged with one misdemeanor count each of driving under the influence and driving while having a .08 percent or higher blood alcohol content, said Deputy District Attorney Ralph Shapiro, the deputy in charge of the Malibu office. In addition, Gibson was charged with driving with an open container, an infraction of the vehicle code.

Gibson was stopped about 2:09 a.m. Friday on Pacific Coast Highway after a Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputy allegedly observed him driving his 2006 Lexus LS at more than 85 mph. An open bottle of tequila allegedly was found in his car.

He was released on Friday on his own recognizance. His arraignment is set for Sept. 28 in Malibu Superior Court, Division 3. If convicted, he's facing up to six months in county jail.

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San Pedro Man Pleads in Illegal Weapons Case

August 7, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LONG BEACH – A San Pedro man pleaded no contest today to illegally discharging and possessing firearms at his home in May, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Jose Arias said Salvador Rodriguez, 47, pleaded to one count of illegal discharge of firearms and three counts of illegally possessing assault weapons. Long Beach Superior Court Judge Charles Sheldon ordered Rodriguez to destroy all illegal weapons, including AK 47s, a Sar 8 and other similar firearms.

The judge also placed Rodriguez on five years of supervised probation, ordered that he undergo psychiatric counseling and that he complete 23 days of CalTrans duty. A 37-day jail term was imposed and Rodriguez was given credit for 37 days already spent in custody.

The defendant was charged on May 9.

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Young Man Charged with Murdering Parents, Sister at Northridge Home

August 8, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

ATTN: ASSIGNMENT EDITORS

Brandon Menard, charged with murdering his parents and teenage sister, is scheduled to appear for arraignment after 1:30 p.m. today in Department S, San Fernando Superior Court, 900 Third St. (Thomas Bros. Page 482, B-7). See the news release below for additional information on the filing. Contact: Sandi Gibbons or Jane Robison, 213-974-3528.

SAN FERNANDO – Capital murder charges were filed today against a 21-year-old man in connection with the fatal stabbings of his 16-year-old sister and their parents on Friday at the family's Northridge home.

Deputy District Attorney Beth Silverman of the Major Crimes Division alleged the special circumstance of multiple murder against Brandon Christoph Menard (dob 5-20-1985) in case No. PA056394. Menard is scheduled to be arraigned later today in San Fernando Superior Court.

The prosecutor requested that Menard be held without bail – standard for a capital murder case. Besides the murder counts and the special circumstance, the complaint alleged that the defendant used a knife to kill the victims. It also was alleged that he used a handgun to shoot and wound his father at some point during the attack on the family.

David Menard, 56, a real estate agent, and his wife, Toni, 55, a nurse, were found dead inside the house in the 17000 block of Stare Street in Northridge Friday morning. Their 16-year-old daughter, Ashley, a high school student, was found dead in the back yard.

The defendant made a 911 call to police early Friday, saying he had found

the bodies. He was questioned and later booked on suspicion of murder. After evaluating the evidence collected by Los Angeles Police Department homicide investigators, the District Attorney's office filed the case.

Although filed as a capital murder case, a determination on whether to seek the death penalty against Menard will not be made until the case moves closer to trial.

sg

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Young Woman Charged in Highway Deaths of Two

August 9, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – A 19-year-old Saugus woman was charged today by the District Attorney's office with gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated in connection with the deaths of a man and woman who were struck and killed while changing a tire on the side of a freeway.

Chelsea Elise Arcos (dob 3-28-1987) was expected to appear for arraignment after 1:30 p.m. today in Department S of San Fernando Superior Court. She has remained in custody since her arrest on Monday.

Arcos was charged in case No. PA057022 with two counts of gross vehicular manslaughter while intoxicated, one count of driving under the influence causing injury, one count of driving with a .08 percent blood alcohol causing injury and one count of leaving the scene of an accident, all felonies. The DUI charges carried allegations of great bodily injury or death to the victims. It also was alleged the defendant personally inflicted the great bodily injury to the victims.

In addition, the defendant was charged with one misdemeanor count of being an unlicensed driver and one count of being under the age of 21 and driving with a blood alcohol of .05 percent, which is an infraction.

Deputy District Attorney Lou Holtz Jr. asked the court to hold Arcos on \$1 million bail.

California Highway Patrol authorities said Jon Tun, 27, of Long Beach and Thong Pok, 35, of Fresno, were killed early Monday while changing a tire on the side of the southbound Golden State Freeway just north of Valencia Boulevard in Santa Clarita.

The victims were struck by a pickup truck allegedly driven by the defendant and dragged about 150 feet, authorities said.

If convicted, Arcos faces a maximum state prison term of 13 years and six months.

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LAPD Officer Charged with Making False Arrests

August 11, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

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(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A 16-year veteran LAPD officer stationed in the Rampart Division was arrested today and charged with filing a false police report and making false arrests, the District Attorney's office announced.

Edward Beltran Zamora, 44 (dob 5-5-62), was released on \$20,000 bail after he turned himself in at Parker Center, said Deputy District Attorney Shannon Presby with the Justice System Integrity Division. He is scheduled to be arraigned Sept. 8 at the Foltz Criminal Justice Center, Division 30.

Following tips, the Los Angeles Police Department conducted an undercover audit of Zamora. During the probe, Zamora allegedly arrested undercover officers on two separate occasions on suspicion of drug possession, even though no drugs were found on either officer. During one arrest, Zamora allegedly falsely claimed in a report he found a baggie of cocaine directly by the suspect when he allegedly found the baggie more than 15 feet away and no drugs were found on the undercover officer, officials said.

Zamora is charged in case No. BA307311 with one felony count of filing a false report, and two misdemeanor counts each of false arrest and false imprisonment. If convicted, Zamora is facing more than three years in state prison.

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Gang Member Convicted of Carnival Murder

August 14, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles Superior Court jury deliberated about a day before convicting a 22-year-old gang member this afternoon of murdering a 14-year-old boy near a Jefferson Park neighborhood carnival last fall, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Paul Kim of the Hardcore Gang Division said Jason Robert Walton faces at least 50 years to life in state prison for the convictions of first-degree murder and attempted murder. The jury also determined that the defendant personally used a handgun to shoot and killed William Cox.

The jury found not true the allegation the crime was street gang related.

Cox, who was not a gang member, and another 14-year-old boy were fired upon on Nov. 13, 2005, outside the carnival at Second Avenue and Rodeo Drive. Both boys were hit, but the other boy survived his wounds.

Walton was arrested after the murder and charged on Nov. 21, 2005. He has remained in custody on \$2 million bail.

Sentencing will be by Superior Court Judge Larry Paul Fidler, who presided over the trial. The sentencing hearing was scheduled for Sept. 5.

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Man Convicted of Attempted Murder in Westwood Shooting

August 14, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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LOS ANGELES – A 20-year-old man charged with attempted murder for a pre-dawn Christmas shooting at a Westwood café last year was convicted today by a jury at the Airport Branch of Los Angeles Superior Court, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Hamid Towfigh of the Airport Branch office said the jury convicted Rafael Martirosyan of one count each of attempted murder and shooting from a motor vehicle. The prosecutor said Martirosyan faces a minimum life sentence when he returns to trial Judge James Dabney's court on Oct. 20.

The jury, which deliberated about two days, determined Martirosyan personally used a handgun to commit the crimes. It also determined that the victim suffered great bodily injury.

Martirosyan was convicted of shooting Faoud Selik, then 36. Selik was hit in the head by a bullet as he sat with friends at the Habibi Café on Broxton Avenue in Westwood shortly before 1:45 a.m. on Dec. 25, 2005.

The shooting occurred when two patrons at the restaurant got into a fight, which escalated into the shooting when Martirosyan left the restaurant and got into a car driven by someone else. He fired out the passenger window as the car drove away. Selik, who was not involved in the fight in the crowded restaurant, was hit by a bullet.

Martirosyan, of Los Angeles, was arrested three days after the shooting. He has remained in custody without bail.

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Felon Charged with Attempted Murder of Two LAPD Officers

August 15, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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LOS ANGELES – A 31-year-old Los Angeles man was charged today with attempted murder of two LAPD officers after he allegedly opened fire with an AK-47 assault weapon during a traffic stop, the District Attorney's office announced.

Jose Mercado Perez Jr, (dob 1-15-75), is scheduled to be arraigned some time after 1:30 p.m. in the Foltz Criminal Justice Center, Division 30, said Deputy District Attorney Frank Tavelman with the Crimes Against Police Officers Section.

Perez is charged in case No. BA307556 with two counts of attempted murder of a police officer, two counts of assault on a peace officer with an assault weapon and one count of possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. The complaint includes gun allegations. Perez is being held on \$3.1 million bail.

Perez is suspected of firing an AK-47 at LAPD Officers James Tuck and John Porras, who stopped a black Honda Accord on Saturday night in the Montecito Heights area. Authorities said Tuck, 26, was struck three times and one bullet nearly severed his left hand at the wrist.

Perez, a second striker convicted in 1995 of robbery, is facing four life terms in prison if convicted.

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Actor Charged with Misdemeanor DUI

August 17, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

GLENDALE – Actor Haley Joel Osment was charged today with misdemeanor driving under the influence, the District Attorney's office announced.

Osment, 18, (dob 4-10-88), was charged with one misdemeanor count each of driving under the influence, driving while having a .08 percent or higher blood alcohol content with the special allegation of having a .15 percent or higher blood alcohol content, and possession of marijuana while driving, said Deputy District Attorney Ed Green, the deputy in charge of the Glendale office. In addition, Osment was charged with being under the age of 21 and driving with a .05 percent blood alcohol content, an infraction of the vehicle code.

Osment lost control of his 1995 Saturn on his way home in the La Canada area around 1 a.m. on July 20. The vehicle flipped over and Osment suffered a broken rib and a shoulder injury.

Osment is scheduled to be arraigned on Sept. 19 in Glendale Superior Court. He is scheduled to surrender at a later date to be booked. The D.A.'s office is asking that bail be set at \$15,000.

If convicted, he's facing up to six months in county jail.

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Gibson Pleads No Contest to DUI

August 17, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

MALIBU – Actor Mel Gibson, through his attorney, pleaded no contest today to a misdemeanor DUI of having a .08 percent or higher blood alcohol content and was sentenced to three years probation, the District Attorney's office announced.

The actor's attorney entered the plea on his behalf before Malibu Superior Court Judge Lawrence Mira, said Deputy District Attorney Gina Satriano. Gibson did not appear in court.

"This was an appropriate outcome which addresses all the public safety concerns of drinking and driving," Satriano said.

Under the terms of a plea agreement, Judge Mira ordered the 50-year-old actor to attend AA meetings five times a week for 4 ½ months and three AA meetings per week for the remainder 7 ½ months. He also was ordered to enroll in an alcohol abuse program for three months. In addition, Gibson was fined a total of \$1,300 and his license was restricted for 90 days by the DMV. In exchange for his plea, the two remaining charges were dismissed.

The actor volunteered to do a public service announcement on the hazards of drinking and driving and volunteered to immediately enter into rehab, Satriano said.

Gibson was stopped about 2:09 a.m. July 28 on Pacific Coast Highway after a Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputy observed him driving his 2006 Lexus LS at more than 85 mph. An open bottle of tequila allegedly was found in his car.

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LAFD Captain Charged with Murder

August 22, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A 23-year veteran with the Los Angeles City Fire Department was charged today with one count of murder, the District Attorney's office announced.

David Jaime Del Toro, 50 (7-13-56), is scheduled to be arraigned on Sept. 7 in Division 30 at the Foltz Criminal Justice Center, said Deputy District Attorney Robert Grace of the Major Crimes Division who will be prosecuting the case. Del Toro, who earlier was released on \$1 million bail, is charged in case No. BA307747.

Del Toro, a captain with the LAFD, is suspected of killing Jennifer Teresa Flores, 42. Her body was discovered about 1:30 a.m. on Aug. 16 in the 5200 block of Loleta Avenue in Los Angeles. LAPD officers allegedly found tire marks that lead from the victim's body to Del Toro's driveway in the 5100 block of Vincent Avenue, about one mile away. Blood allegedly was found in Del Toro's Toyota Tundra truck parked at his house.

If convicted, he's facing 25 years to life in prison.

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Fugitive Charge Filed Against Suspect in JonBenet Ramsey Murder

August 22, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – John Mark Karr, who Boulder, Colo., authorities have named as a suspect in the JonBenet Ramsey murder, was charged in Los Angeles today with being a fugitive from justice.

The one-count felony complaint, filed by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office, brings the case into court so Karr, 41, can say whether he waives extradition to Colorado or wants a hearing. The complaint (BA307876) noted that Karr was charged with murder in a warrant issued on Aug. 15 in Boulder County, Colo.

Karr, who was flown into Los Angeles from Bangkok, Thailand, has been in Los Angeles County Jail since late Sunday. He is scheduled to appear in Los Angeles Superior Court later this morning.

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Former Los Angeles City Commissioner Indicted

August 23, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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LOS ANGELES – Former Los Angeles City commissioner Leland Wong has been indicted on bribery, conflict of interest, embezzlement and other crimes investigated as part of a joint state-federal probe into allegations of “pay to play” by some officials in the administration of former Mayor James Hahn, the District Attorney's and U.S. Attorney's offices announced today.

“The indictment of former Los Angeles City Commissioner Leland Wong by the County Grand Jury is a significant step in rooting out corrupt public officials and exposing corruption within public institutions,” District Attorney Steve Cooley said in a brief written statement.

“The Public Integrity Division, which I created in 2001 and with an almost 99 percent record of convictions, will prosecute the Wong case,” Cooley added. “This ‘pay to play’ scandal remains a joint investigation by the U.S. Attorney’s office and the Public Integrity Division (PID).”

The 20-count felony indictment was returned late yesterday by the grand jury. It was unsealed this morning when Wong, 49, surrendered and was arraigned before Superior Court Judge David Wesley. The District Attorney’s office requested bail be set at \$390,000, but Wong was released on his own recognizance. A pretrial hearing was scheduled for Sept. 7 in Dept. 108.

Wong was indicted on 13 counts of grand theft by embezzlement, one count of accepting a bribe, two counts of conflict of interest, one count of perjury and three counts of filing false tax returns. The charges cover a period of time between 2000 and 2005.

The bribery, conflict of interest and perjury charges involve Wong’s activities as a city commissioner. They relate to dealings with Evergreen Shipping beginning in early 2002 while Wong was an airport commissioner. The indictment alleged he accepted a \$100,000 bribe from an official of that firm.

The grand theft by embezzlement charges stem from his employment as director of government relations for Kaiser-Permanente. Each of the 13 counts alleged Wong stole “more than \$400.” The embezzlement was uncovered, according to the indictment, by another Kaiser-Permanente employee in October 2003.

Wong has served on the Airport, Harbor and Water and Power commissions for various administrations. He was an Airport and Water and Power commissioner during the Hahn Administration.

The investigation began after Wong abruptly resigned from both Kaiser and the Department of Water and Power Commission in January 2004. The case is the product of the ongoing investigation by the District Attorney’s Bureau of Investigation and the California Franchise Tax Board working as part of the joint state-federal probe into allegations of “pay to play.”

The task force investigation has centered upon allegations that officials in the former mayor’s administration solicited political contributions in exchange for lucrative city contracts.

Deputy District Attorneys Max Huntsman and May Chung of PID began presenting evidence to the grand jury on Aug. 3. Forty-one witnesses testified.

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Four Teens Charged with Attempted Murder of School Police Officer

August 29, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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POMONA – Four teens, ages 14 to 16, are scheduled to be arraigned today on attempted murder, aggravated mayhem and other charges in connection with the Aug. 15 baseball bat attack of a school police officer in Rowland Heights, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Ted Loewen of the Pomona Juvenile Division said the four teenage boys are charged with one count each of attempted murder, aggravated mayhem, assault on a peace officer, burglary and vandalism over \$400. In addition, the 15-year-old suspected of hitting the officer in the head with a baseball bat is charged with the special allegations of use of a deadly weapon and great bodily injury.

The names of the juveniles are not being released because of their ages. The D.A.'s office is seeking to have the four found unfit to be tried as juveniles.

The four allegedly broke into Jellick Elementary in Rowland Heights shortly after 5 p.m. on Aug. 15. They allegedly attacked a 62-year-old campus police officer who responded to the burglary. He later lost his left eye as a result of the attack, Loewen said.

They are scheduled to be arraigned after 1:30 p.m. in Pasadena Juvenile Court, Dept. 270. The 14-year-old charged in case No. KJ28823 is from Walnut. The 15-year-old charged in case No. KJ28822 is from Walnut. A second 15-year-old charged in case No. KJ28825 is from Hacienda Heights. And the 16-year-old charged in case No. KJ28824 is from La Puente.

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Suspended Alhambra Police Officer Charged with Child Molestation

August 30, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A suspended Alhambra police officer was charged today with 10 counts of molesting two teenage boys, including one who was an Explorer with the Baldwin Park Police Department, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Renee Korn of the Justice System Integrity Division filed the 10-count complaint (BA308373) against Michael James Fisher, 42 (dob 5-26-1964). Fisher, free on \$100,000 bond, is scheduled to be arraigned on Tuesday, Sept. 5, in Division 30 of Los Angeles Superior Court.

Fisher is charged with molesting one of the victims over an eight-month period in 2003. The second victim, according to the complaint, was molested in 2005 and 2006. The both victims were in their mid teens, authorities said.

The defendant is charged with three counts of lewd act with a child aged 14 and 15, four counts of oral copulation of a person under the age of 18 and three counts of sodomy of a person under the age of 18. If convicted as charged, Fisher faces a possible maximum state prison term of nine years.

Fisher was arrested on Aug. 14 following an investigation by the Sheriff's Special Victims Bureau.

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Casden Official Charged with Commercial Bribery

August 30, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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Update: Mr. Archibald pleaded guilty today to both counts. Sentencing is set for Oct. 4 in Division 50

LOS ANGELES – A vice president of Casden Properties Inc. has been charged with taking bribes from contractors and filing a false tax return following an investigation into money laundering of campaign contributions, the District Attorney's office announced today.

John W. Archibald, 56, who has been employed as the vice president of Construction Operations of Casden Inc. since 1998, allegedly took more than \$100,000 in bribes from subcontractors working on the Park La Brea project, said Deputy District Attorney Juliet Schmidt with the Public Integrity Division.

During a previous investigation involving the money laundering of campaign contributions that resulted in misdemeanor convictions of Archibald and several Casden subcontractors, investigators with the D. A.'s Bureau of Investigation discovered more than \$112,000 in separate deposits made by Casden Properties' subcontractors to the personal credit card account of Archibald between November 1999 and December 2001.

Archibald allegedly accepted bribes from subcontractors in exchange for contracts to work on Casden Properties.

The California Franchise Tax Board also reviewed Archibald's tax returns for 2000 and 2001. Archibald allegedly failed to include the deposits on his tax returns.

Archibald is charged in case No. BA307488 with one felony count each of commercial bribery and filing a false tax return. He is scheduled to be arraigned after 9 a.m. at the Foltz Criminal Court Building, Division 30. If convicted, he's facing more than three years in state prison.

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Broker Convicted of Murdering Wife A Year Ago

August 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

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PASADENA – A brokerage executive was convicted by a Pasadena Superior Court jury today of murdering his wife at their Arcadia home a year ago.

The same jury next week will hear the sanity phase of the trial of 51-year-old Richard Robert Russo. The trial was bifurcated due to Russo's plea of not guilty and not guilty by reason of insanity. The sanity portion of the case starts on Sept. 6 in the court of trial Judge Michelle R. Rosenblat.

The jury convicted Russo of one count of first degree murder and found true the allegation that he used a handgun to kill his wife, Carmen. The jury deliberated about a day and a half before announcing its verdicts.

The jury also convicted him of two counts of child endangerment because the couple's two children were home when Russo barricaded himself overnight inside the family's Arcadia residence following the shooting. The gun use allegations were found true for both child endangerment counts.

Police were summoned to the home on August 29, 2005, by a 911 call. Russo surrendered on August 30, 2005, and has remained in custody since his arrest.

If the jury finds that Russo was sane at the time the crimes were committed, he faces a possible life prison term.

The case is being prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Maribelle Estrella of the Pasadena office.

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Ex-Felon Charged with Attempted Murder of Sheriff's Deputy

August 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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LOS ANGELES – A 47-year-old ex-felon was charged today with attempted murder of a police officer and additional charges in connection with Monday's bank robbery in Malibu that left a sheriff's deputy seriously injured, the District Attorney's office announced.

Charles Terreal Washington, (dob 8-12-59), is scheduled to be arraigned after 1:30 p.m. at LAX, Dept. 144. He is charged in case No. SA059337 with 14 felony counts, including assault on a peace officer, evading an officer causing injury, possession of a firearm by a felon, nine robberies and one attempted robbery, said Deputy District Attorney Keri Modder with the Crimes Against Peace Officers unit. The complaint also includes the special allegations of personal use of a handgun, causing great bodily injury and assault with a deadly weapon. He is being held on \$2.5 million bail.

Washington is suspected of robbing the Wells Fargo Bank located at 23361 Pacific Coast Highway in Malibu on Monday. Sheriff's deputies arrived just as the suspect fled in a blue Honda. During the chase down PCH, Washington allegedly ran down Sheriff's Deputy James Mulay, who was on a motorcycle. Mulay was seriously injured. The suspect fled the scene.

Washington, a second striker, was arrested on Aug. 29 by El Segundo Police. He is also suspected in a spate of robberies in the South Bay over the weekend.

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Wife Charged With Attempted Murder of Police Officer Husband

July 5, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

VAN NUYS – The newlywed wife of an LAPD officer was charged today with three counts of attempted murder after she allegedly shot him twice at their Reseda home and they allegedly tried to run him over, the District Attorney's office announced.

Yolanda Yvette Cade, 38 (dob 6-11-68), is charged in case No. LA052834. She is scheduled to be arraigned after 1:30 p.m. in Van Nuys Superior Court, Dept. 100, said Deputy District Attorney William Penzin.

She is being held on \$3 million bail.

On July 1, Cade allegedly shot her husband of one month once in the arm and once in the lower body after she found a text message on his cell phone allegedly to another woman. When the officer ran out of their apartment in the 18000 block of Hatteras Street, Cade followed him in a vehicle. She allegedly tried to run him and a bystander down at a bus stop.

Cade is also charged with two counts of child endangerment because she had her two children and a baby in the car, Penzin said. She is also charged with the special allegation of personal discharge of a gun. If convicted, she's facing up to 70 years to life in prison.

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District Attorney Announces Appointments

July 7, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOS ANGELES – Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley announced today the appointment of Irwindale Police Chief **R. Ronald Ingels** and retired LAPD Commander **Keith D. Bushey** to serve as Law Enforcement Liaisons.

Bushey will assume the post on Monday, July 10. Ingels, who is currently working as interim Irwindale Police Chief, starts Sept. 5. The two men replace Law Enforcement Liaison Dominick J. Rivetti, who recently was appointed chief of the D.A.'s Bureau of Investigation.

"I'm pleased to announce the appointment of these two accomplished and outstanding individuals to the D.A.'s staff," Cooley said.

Ingels began his law enforcement career as a patrol officer in 1971 with the La Verne Police Department. He quickly rose through the ranks of the department and was appointed police chief in 1992. During his 13-year tenure as police chief, he created and implemented the department's Citizen's Academy, implemented the Senior Volunteer Patrol Program and developed and administered a five-year strategic plan.

He was a past chairman of L.A. IMPACT, the Los Angeles Inter-Agency Metropolitan Police Apprehension Crime Task Force, and past president of the Los Angeles County Police Chiefs' Association. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Public Administration from the University of La Verne in 1981.

Bushey's 40-year career in law enforcement began in 1966 when he joined the Los Angeles Police Department as a patrol officer. He retired in 1996 as an LAPD commander. He also served as Marshal of San Bernardino County from 1996 to 1999 and Deputy Chief of the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Department from 1999 to 2005.

He is currently a part-time instructor for the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Prior to his career in law enforcement, Keith served in the United States

Marine Corps. He received his Bachelor's Degree in Police Administration in 1969 and Master's Degree in Public Service in 1976 from California State University at Los Angeles.

The D.A.'s Law Enforcement Liaison is responsible for facilitating communication between the D.A.'s office and numerous federal, state and local law enforcement agencies.

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Buttafuoco Pleads No Contest in Ammo Possession Case

July 11, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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SAN FERNANDO – Joey Buttafuoco pleaded no contest today to one count of possession of ammo by a felon and was sentenced to one year in county jail and three years state prison, but the prison sentence was suspended, the District Attorney's office announced.

Buttafuoco, 50, who made headlines in the 1990's for having an affair with a teenage girl who shot his wife in the face in New York, pleaded open to the court, meaning there was no plea agreement with the District Attorney's office, said Deputy District Attorney Lou Holtz.

Buttafuoco was immediately sentenced by San Fernando Superior Court Judge Ronald S. Coen, who ordered Buttafuoco to surrender on Nov. 1 to begin serving his one year in county jail. Judge Coen also placed Buttafuoco on three years formal probation. The one count of ammo possession stemmed from a search Aug. 10, 2005, of his Chatsworth home by the Los Angeles County Probation Department.

Buttafuoco, who was on probation after having pleaded guilty in March 2004 to felony insurance fraud, also was given a five-year suspended prison term today by Judge Coen for violating the terms of his probation. Holtz said Buttafuoco faces up to five years, eight months in state prison if he is violates any terms and conditions of his probation.

The insurance fraud case stemmed from an investigation into several auto body shops, including one that Buttafuoco co-owned in Chatsworth. He advised undercover investigators on how to file false insurance claims and how to best scam the insurance company.

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La Puente Man Charged in Chinatown Cold Case Murder Pleads Guilty

July 11, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOS ANGELES – A La Puente man charged with murdering his former employer in Chinatown nearly 10 years ago pleaded guilty today to one count of second-degree murder, the District Attorney's office announced.

Thanh Chi Phung, 45 (dob 12-3-1960), also waived his rights to file any appeals. He was immediately sentenced by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge David Wesley to 16 years to life in prison, said Deputy District Attorney John Lewin of the Major Crimes Division.

Phung was charged with the Nov. 5, 1994, murder of Rosemary Hom, a 43-year-old mother of four from Pasadena who worked at the family bakery in Chinatown. Mrs. Hom was killed after she arrived for work at the family bakery. She pulled her Mazda SUV into the parking garage, waving at an employee. Lewin said a man was seen diving under the garage gate and going inside. The employee to whom Hom waved saw the SUV leave within 20-30 minutes, but did not see who was driving, authorities said.

The SUV was recovered several hours later in an industrial area about a mile away. The victim was found on the backseat floorboard. She had been stabbed to death. Her purse, identification, credit cards and jewelry were missing.

Blood stains were recovered at the time from the SUV and the garage, Lewin said. Although conventional serology and DNA analysis available at the time showed blood from two different sources, the case stopped there until 2004 when the evidence was flagged by a state DNA databank.

Phung, originally from Vietnam, had worked for Hom, but was fired about a year before she was killed, Lewin said. He was arrested by Los Angeles police on July 1, 2004.

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Alleged Tagging Crew Member Charged in Fatal Shooting

July 11, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LONG BEACH – An 18-year-old tagging crew member who allegedly tried to flee to Mexico after the shooting of a 15-year-old boy in Long Beach early Sunday morning was charged today with murder.

Deputy District Attorney Kenneth Lynch of the Hardcore Gang Division said Cesario Vasquez (dob 12-29-1987) is scheduled to appear for arraignment this afternoon in Department J of Long Beach Superior Court, 415 W. Ocean Blvd. He is charged with one count of murder with the allegation he used a revolver to commit the crime.

Lynch also charged the defendant with one count of voluntary manslaughter with the allegation that Vasquez used a gun to commit the crime. He said that evidence presented by police indicated that the shooting was not a traditional drive-by shooting. Instead, he said, evidence showed the victim – who was not a gang member – walked up to the car containing Vasquez. A friend of the victim, who authorities believe is a gang member, was with him. Words allegedly were exchanged.

Vasquez, of Long Beach, was a passenger in the car, authorities said. He was arrested at the U.S.-Mexican border later that day and returned to Long Beach yesterday.

Four others who were in the car were questioned by police, but later released.

Police said the shooting occurred shortly after midnight on Sunday near Pine Avenue and First Street in Long Beach. Victim Daniel Cruz of San Pedro and three others, including the friend who went to the car with him, were walking along the street when the confrontation occurred, authorities said.

If convicted as charged, the defendant faces a possible maximum state

prison term of 50 years to life. Bail was recommended at \$1 million in case No. NA070902.

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District Attorney Analysis of Blue Ribbon Rampart Review Panel Report

July 12, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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The authors of "Rampart Reconsidered" have outlined the weaknesses and shortcomings of the Los Angeles Police Department and, to some extent, the criminal justice system, as police officials, prosecutors, the courts and others struggled to deal with a major police corruption scandal. Although it discusses some changes within the LAPD since Rampart, the report fails to cite significant reforms made by then newly-elected District Attorney Steve Cooley. In early 2001, D.A. Cooley instituted several policy initiatives to short-circuit further "Ramparts" and ensure the District Attorney's Office remains independent in investigating and prosecuting allegations of police corruption.

Among other reforms, Cooley:

- Created a new division (the Justice System Integrity Division) with adequate staffing of attorneys and investigators from the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation to investigate and prosecute police and others within the criminal justice system who break the law while performing their duties.
- Created protocols for the referral of accusations of police misconduct by law enforcement.
- Established a D.A. office policy for prosecutors to report suspicions of police misconduct.
- Created protocols for the District Attorney Response Team review of all officer-involved shootings.
- Instituted a new system to ensure defense attorneys are given all information -- so-called "Brady material" -- that they are legally entitled to receive concerning police misconduct.
- Requested and assisted the Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury investigation into the role of LAPD managers in the Rampart corruption scandal. The Grand Jury has declined to make the results of that investigation public.
- Proposed decentralization of the way cases are handled and

processed in the Central District to ensure that prosecutors are able to more closely observe the LAPD as it arrests individuals, investigates crime and collects evidence necessary for prosecutors to determine if criminal charges are filed.

“I commend the Blue Ribbon Panel for its thoroughness and agree with many of its observations,” Cooley said. “I also agree that the ball is now in our court – police, prosecutors, defense lawyers, judges and others – to ensure that the necessary changes are made to spot corruption of and within the justice system early. We have implemented many reforms and will be looking at others. I urge all my colleagues in the criminal justice system to do the same.”

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Rafael Perez Arrested on Warrant Charging Him With Perjury

July 12, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TORRANCE – Rafael Antonio Perez, the disgraced former Los Angeles police officer whose disclosures sparked what became known as the Rampart Police Division Scandal, was arrested today on a felony warrant charging him with perjury.

Perez, 38, was arrested by investigators for the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) as he was visiting his federal parole officer in Inglewood, authorities said. He was taken to Los Angeles County Jail for booking. Bail has been fixed at \$60,000 and an arraignment date has not yet been set.

Charged in case No. YA 065378 filed in Torrance on June 29, Perez is accused of lying in his application for a California driver's license on June 30, 2005. The criminal complaint, filed as a felony arrest warrant, alleged Perez's felony conviction in Los Angeles Superior Court in 2000. Perez pleaded guilty to one count of grand theft and one count of possession of cocaine for sale. He was sentenced in 2001 to five years in state prison, then prosecuted in U. S. District Court for violating the civil rights of a suspect who was shot by police. Perez also pleaded guilty in that case and in 2002, received a two-year federal prison sentence.

Perez was working with the Los Angeles Police Department's anti-gang CRASH unit in the Rampart Division when he was arrested and charged in connection with stealing cocaine from the LAPD's evidence locker. He eventually pleaded guilty, alleging he and other officers planted drugs and weapons on innocent people.

The allegations led to a lengthy investigation that led to charges being filed against eight other Rampart Division CRASH officers, including Perez's partner, Nino Durden. Four pleaded guilty and four were tried. Three were convicted, but the trial judge overturned the jury's verdict.

If convicted of the current charge, Perez faces a possible maximum state prison term of five years.

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Former LAPD Officer Convicted of Assault

July 13, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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ALHAMBRA – A former LAPD officer was found guilty today of felony assault for beating up his girlfriend, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Rene Cartaya with the Justice System Integrity Division said Victor Pallares is scheduled to be sentenced by Judge Charles Lee on Aug. 14 in Alhambra Superior Court, Dept. X. He faces seven years in state prison.

A jury found Pallares guilty of one count of assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury. The jury found him not guilty of corporal injury to a spouse or cohabitant and not guilty of assault with intent to commit rape. The jury hung on one count of false imprisonment by violence.

Pallares, who left the LAPD in 2005, was arrested May 23, 2005 by Alhambra police after they responded to a 911 call from the victim at his home.

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Attorney Accused of Using Internet to Lure Underage Girls Convicted

July 14, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CHATSWORTH – An attorney accused of using the Internet to lure underage girls was convicted today of attempted child sexual abuse, attempted sending harmful matter by electronic mail, child annoying and committing a lewd act on a child.

Deputy District Attorney Tannaz Mokayef of the San Fernando office said Arthur George Crabtree, 45, was remanded into custody by Superior Court Judge Melvin Sandvig after the jury verdict was returned. Crabtree, who had been free on \$100,000 bail, faces a possible maximum prison term of more than eight years. He was convicted of five felony and five misdemeanor charges.

Mokayef said sentencing was scheduled for July 18 in San Fernando Superior Court. Although the trial was held in the Chatsworth Superior Courthouse, sentencing was moved back to San Fernando, which has facilities for in-custody defendants.

Crabtree, who has a law office in Glendale and lives in the Santa Clarita Valley, was arrested in January 2005 by Sheriff's deputies at the Greyhound Bus Station in downtown Los Angeles. The arrest was part of an undercover sting by a task force aimed at those who prey on teenagers via the Internet. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is one of the local agencies participating with federal authorities on the task force.

Mokayef said Crabtree corresponded via the Internet with a person he thought was a 13-year-old girl. He sent her a bus ticket and \$20, making arrangements to meet her at the Greyhound Bus Depot on Los Angeles on Jan. 19, 2005. He was arrested while waiting in vain for the "girl" to arrive.

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Charges Filed Against Fugitive Gang Member Accused of Wounding Two Little Boys

July 18, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOS ANGELES - The District Attorney's Hardcore Gang Division filed criminal charges today against a fugitive gang member accused of shooting and wounding two little boys in Boyle Heights over the weekend.

The complaint (BA306052) was filed as an arrest warrant against Mauricio A. Jimenez, 26 (dob 8-10-1979). He remains at large and has been the subject of a widely published Los Angeles Police Department manhunt.

Jimenez was charged with three counts of assault with a semiautomatic firearm. Two of the victims, Jeremy Hernandez, 3, and his 6-year-old brother, James, were hit by the gunfire. They were hospitalized, but are expected to survive.

A third victim, an adult, was listed in the complaint, but there was no indication he was hit by the gunfire.

Jimenez additionally was charged with discharge of a firearm with gross negligence and possession of a firearm by a felon with two prior convictions. A misdemeanor count of brandishing a firearm also was charged.

The complaint alleged the defendant personally used a firearm to commit the crimes. It also alleged that the crimes were connected to street gang activity and that one of the victims, Jeremy, was under the age of 5. It was alleged that both children suffered great bodily injury.

If convicted, the defendant would face a maximum state prison sentence of more than 30 years. Bail of \$1 million was recommended.

The shooting occurred Saturday night when a gunman fired toward a crowd in the 400 block of North St. Louis Street. Police at a news conference

Sunday identified the suspect as Jimenez, who they said is a member of a Boyle Heights street gang.

Authorities said Jimenez was deported to Mexico earlier this year after serving a state prison term for possession of a firearm by felon. That conviction, case No. BA277797, and another conviction, case No. BA247692 for possessing a firearm near a school, were listed in the complaint filed today by Deputy District Attorney Joseph Esposito. A permanent prosecutor will be assigned the case once Jimenez is arrested.

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Man Convicted of Attacking Homeless Men

July 19, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOS ANGELES – One of two young men charged attacking two homeless men after watching a "Bumfights" DVD last year was found guilty today of two counts of assault, the District Attorney's office announced.

A Los Angeles Superior Court jury found Justin Edward Brumfield, 20, guilty of assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury and assault with a deadly weapon, a bat. The jury also found true the allegation that the assault left one victim with a brain injury. Deputy District Attorney Michael Lebovich prosecuted the case.

Brumfield was convicted of beating one victim, striking him in the arm with a baseball bat, at 9th and Wall streets. He was convicted of attacking the second victim, Ernest Adams, and beating him in the head, causing major injuries to the brain. Adams lost sight in one eye due to the attack. Both attacks occurred on Aug. 16, 2005.

A security guard happened on the scene, called police and followed the Toyota Corolla. The pair was arrested by LAPD.

Judge Sam Ohta declared a mistrial on one count of attempted murder after the jury deadlocked. Prosecutors will decide whether to retry Brumfield on that count by Aug. 1, the next court date.

Brumfield is facing up to 11 years in state prison on the two assault convictions.

Trial for co-defendant William Alexander Orantes, (dob 4-12-86), is scheduled to begin Aug. 9 in Dept. 128.

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Gene Therapy Pioneer Convicted of Child Molestation

July 19, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles Superior Court jury convicted a nationally-known gene therapy scientist today of molesting a young girl over a three-year period beginning in 1999.

The jury deliberated a day before convicting William French Anderson, 69, of one count of continuous sexual abuse and three counts of lewd act upon a child under the age of 14. Anderson, who has been free on \$600,000 bail, was remanded into custody.

Superior Court Judge Michael Pastor, who presided over the month-long trial, ordered Anderson to undergo a 90-day diagnostic evaluation prior to sentencing. Sentencing was scheduled for Nov. 17. Anderson faces a possible maximum sentence of 22 years in state prison.

Anderson originally was charged in 2004. After several months without a preliminary hearing, the District Attorney's office presented the evidence to the Los Angeles County Grand Jury, which indicted Anderson in January of last year.

The victim, now 19 years old, and the defendant both testified at trial. The victim's mother was a colleague of Anderson's at USC.

Deputy District Attorneys Cathryn Brougham and James Garrison of the Major Crimes Division presented evidence that Anderson became the girl's mentor and coached her in Karate. The molestations, starting when the victim was 10 years old, occurred at Anderson's San Marino home, the prosecutors said.

Anderson was arrested on July 30, 2004, when search warrants were served at his home and his office in the Gene Therapy Laboratories at USC. Anderson at the time was director of the Gene Therapy Laboratories at the USC Keck School of Medicine. He was placed on administrative leave after his arrest.

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Former Maywood City Employee Charged With Solicitation of Murder, Making Criminal Threats Against City Officials

July 21, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOS ANGELES – A former Maywood deputy city clerk has been charged with solicitation of murder and making criminal threats against a Maywood city councilman and the mayor, the District Attorney's office announced today.

Deputy District Attorney Sandi Roth with the Public Integrity Division said Hector Duarte, 29 (dob 2-3-77), was arrested late Thursday on a felony complaint for arrest warrant. He is charged in case No. VA096381 with one count of solicitation of murder, and three counts each of making criminal threats and threatening public officials.

Duarte is scheduled to be arraigned today in East Los Angeles Court, Division 5. He is being held on \$1.3 million bail.

Duarte, who allegedly was upset about possible budget cuts that might reduce employee salaries or eliminate his job, is suspected of trying to hire someone to murder Councilman Felipe Aguirre. In addition, he allegedly left a threatening note in January in Aguirre's employee mailbox. He also allegedly left threatening messages in January and again in June on Maywood Mayor Thomas Martin's cell phone.

If convicted, he's facing more than 10 years in state prison.

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Burbank Woman Charged with Involuntary Manslaughter in Death of 75-Year-Old Man

July 24, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BURBANK – A 31-year-old Burbank woman pleaded not guilty today to involuntary manslaughter in connection with the June 30 assault on a 75-year-old parking attendant in Burbank, the District Attorney's office announced.

Hilda Voskanian, (dob 2-4-75), was arraigned in Burbank Superior Court, Div. 2. She was charged in case No. GA066401 with one felony count, said Deputy District Attorney Lee Mitchell. She is being held on \$25,000 bail.

Burbank police said Voskanian, who is eight months pregnant, allegedly assaulted Pedro Dorado on June 30 after getting into a dispute over a \$5 parking fee. The victim later went to the hospital for treatment of a head injury and went into a coma. He died July 18, police said.

During an investigation, police arrested Voskanian and her husband, Oshin Grigorian, 35. Prosecutors declined to file charges on Grigorian.

She is scheduled to return to court Aug. 3 for a preliminary hearing in Burbank Superior Court, Div. 1. If convicted, she's facing up to four years in state prison.

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Ex-Convict Admits Murdering Young Woman Three Years Ago

July 26, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LOS ANGELES – Victor Lawrence Paleologus, the ex-convict charged with murdering 21-year-old Kristine Johnson in 2003, pleaded guilty today to her first-degree murder, the District Attorney's office announced.

The 44-year-old defendant pleaded guilty in the middle of his jury trial. Superior Court Judge Robert J. Perry, presiding over the trial, excused jurors and ordered Paleologus back for sentencing on Sept. 15. He is expected to be sentenced to 25 year to life in state prison.

Deputy District Attorney David Walgren of the Major Crimes Division said Paleologus was questioned in court about the plea, establishing a factual basis that he was the person who strangled the victim and dumped her body in the Hollywood Hills in early 2003. Walgren said additional counts against Paleologus, including burglary, forgery and auto theft, will be dismissed at the time of sentencing.

Paleologus was charged in May 2003 with Johnson's murder.

The young woman, who lived in Santa Monica, disappeared on Feb. 15, 2003, saying she was going to do some shopping. Hikers found her body on March 9, 2003, at the bottom of a ravine on Skyline Drive in the Hollywood Hills.

Paleologus was charged with Johnson's murder on May 12, 2003. He has remained in custody without bail.

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Women Charged with Murders of Two Men in 1999, 2005

July 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Two women accused of fraudulently cashing more than \$2 million in life insurance claims of two men they befriended were charged today with murdering both men, the District Attorney's office announced.

The capital murder charges were contained in a felony complaint for arrest warrant filed against Helen Louise Golay, 75 (dob 2-3-1931), and Olga Rutterschmidt, 73 (dob 3-5-1933). Both were charged in case No. BA306576 with two counts of capital murder and two counts of conspiracy to commit murder for financial gain. Special circumstances of financial gain and multiple were alleged against both defendants.

Deputy District Attorney Shellie Samuels of the Major Crimes Division asked the court to hold both women without bail, which is standard for a capital murder case. The District Attorney's office will not make a decision on whether to seek the death penalty against either or both defendants until the case moves closer to trial.

The women currently are in federal custody on fraud charges stemming from the life insurance policies they allegedly took out and collected on Paul Vados and Kenneth McDavid, the murder victims.

Vados, 73, was killed on Nov. 8, 1999. He was run over by an automobile in an alley in the 300 block of North La Brea Avenue in Hollywood. It was a hit and run.

McDavid, 50, was killed June 21, 2005. He was run over by an automobile in an alley in the 1200 block of Westwood Boulevard in Westwood. It was a hit and run.

According to the conspiracy counts in the criminal complaint, the women

provided housing for both men prior to their deaths. The complaint also alleged they applied for dozens of insurance policies in the men's names and were involved in activities relating to the victims after their deaths.

Both defendants are in federal custody, so no arraignment date in Los Angeles Superior Court can be scheduled until their transfer to state custody.

Los Angeles Police Department detectives, meanwhile, are continuing their investigation.

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Final Defendant Sentenced in Israeli Murder Case

June 1, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

VAN NUYS – The final defendant in the murders of two Israelis whose bodies were dumped in shallow graves near Barstow 3-1/2 years ago was sentenced today to spend the remainder of his life in state prison.

Shane Huang, 37, was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole by Van Nuys Superior Court Judge Susan M. Speer, who presided over the defendant's jury trial last year. A jury on May 12, 2005, convicted Huang of two counts of first-degree murder and found true the special circumstance of multiple murder.

The District Attorney's office decided not to seek the death penalty against Huang, leaving a sentence of life in prison without the possibility of parole. Actual sentencing was delayed several times, however.

Ben Wertzberger and Adar' Ne'eman, childhood friends from Tel Aviv, were killed sometime between Dec. 2 and Dec. 3, 2002, at a Canoga Park house rented by Huang. Huang grew marijuana at the house on DeSoto Avenue, authorities said.

Wertzberger, who moved from Israel to California seeking work as a disk jockey, had lived at the Canoga Park house with Huang's blessing. Prosecutors said he took care of the marijuana until he moved to Las Vegas.

In late 2002, Ne'eman came from Tel Aviv to visit his childhood friend, Wertzberger. The pair ended up in Los Angeles and went to the Canoga Park house. Huang, fearing that his marijuana was going to be stolen, called two friends – co-defendants Benjamin Frandsen, 32, and Nicholas Turner, 31.

Wertzberger and Ne'eman were killed at the Canoga Park house, where they were beaten over a two-day period, authorities said. Prosecutors said there

was no evidence Ne'eman was involved with the marijuana.

The bodies of the victims, both 24, were taken to a campground near Interstate 15 and Afton Canyon Road about 40 miles northeast of Barstow. They were buried in shallow graves. The bodies were not discovered until September 2003.

At the time the bodies were found, it was believed that Wertzberger and Ne'eman had been kidnapped from Las Vegas, where they were last seen. The FBI investigated the case and a federal indictment charging kidnapping was returned against Huang and Frandsen on Sept. 26, 2003.

Further investigation, however, showed there was no kidnapping and the murders occurred in Los Angeles County. The case eventually was presented to the District Attorney's office, who charged the three men with murder in June 2004.

Turner pleaded guilty to two counts of false imprisonment and was sentenced to a probationary term. Huang and Frandsen were tried separately. Deputy District Attorney Karla Kerlin prosecuted Huang and Deputy District Attorney Shellie Samuels prosecuted Frandsen. Frandsen also was convicted of two counts of first-degree murder with the special circumstance of multiple murder.

As in the case of Huang, the District Attorney's office decided not to seek the death penalty against Frandsen. He was sentenced earlier this year to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

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Officer's Son Charged with Robbery

June 8, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – The son of a Los Angeles police captain was charged today with robbery and other counts following his arrest Tuesday near a Westchester boutique, the District Attorney's office announced.

Kyle Bernard Jackson, 20 (dob 12-26-85), and two others were charged in case No. SA060509. He is scheduled to be arraigned some time after 1:30 p. m. today at Airport Court, Dept. 144, said Deputy District Attorney Karen Murcia. He is being held on \$180,000 bail. Jackson is the son LAPD Capt. Kyle Jackson, commanding officer of the department's Robbery Homicide Division.

Jackson and a second man, John Richard Rebeiro, 21, allegedly robbed the Jennifer Jeanne Boutique in the 8300 block of Lincoln Boulevard on Tuesday afternoon. As they were running away, they were seen by an off-duty Santa Monica Police Department officer who followed them after they sped away in a vehicle. Police stopped the car about two miles from boutique and arrested Jackson, Rebeiro and Mallory Eddy, 20 (dob 11-28-85). All three are from Los Angeles.

Jackson and Rebeiro are charged with one count each of second-degree robbery and receiving stolen property. Both are charged with the special allegation of personally using a handgun. In addition, Jackson is charged with one count of dissuading a witness from reporting a crime. Eddy is charged with one count of receiving stolen property.

If convicted, Jackson is facing up to 15 years, eight months in state prison.

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Private Investigator, Real Estate Firm Owner & Third Man Charged in Alleged Plot to Prevent Testimony of Rape Victim

June 8, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A private investigator, the owner of a real estate firm and third man were charged today with conspiracy to obstruct justice in connection with an alleged plot to prevent a rape victim from testifying against the businessman's son.

The three were arrested on Tuesday by investigators with the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation. Two of the trio – the businessman and an employee – posted \$1 million bail each. The private investigator, 45-year-old Bradley Gregory Miller (dob 9-4-1960), is expected to be arraigned this afternoon in Division 30 of Los Angeles Superior Court. He is being held on \$1 million bail.

The other defendants, 58-year-old George Izquierdo (dob 2-1-1948), owner of Las Casas Reality, and one of his employees, 30-year-old Camilo Valentin (dob 3-26-1976), posted bail shortly after their arrests. They are due to appear for arraignment in Division 30 on June 27.

The men are charged in case No. BA 303907 with one count of conspiracy to obstruct justice and three counts of offering to bribe a witness. The complaint alleged the crimes occurred between Feb.1 and March 10, 2005.

If convicted, each faces a possible maximum sentence of five years in state prison.

The case involves an alleged attempt to prevent a woman from testifying against Alex Javier Izquierdo, 29 (dob 3-25-1977), accused in case No. GA 055815 of rape, torture and other crimes. The woman is the alleged victim. A pretrial hearing has been scheduled for July 20 in Pasadena Superior Court.

The case against Miller, George Izquierdo and Valentin will be prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Frank M. Tavelman of the Target Crimes Division. The investigation was done by the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation.

The victim in the Pasadena case had begun testifying at a preliminary hearing early last year. The hearing was postponed about two weeks. When it resumed, the victim could not be found. The complaint against Miller and the others alleged that the victim was taken out of town and paid money to keep her from testifying.

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Felon Charged with Cold Hit Rape of 68-Year-Old Victim

June 9, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A man convicted of the 2001 rape a 90-year-old woman is scheduled to be arraigned today on charges stemming from a June 17, 2001 sexual attack on a 68-year-old woman, the District Attorney's office announced.

Eduardo E. Rodriguez, 37 (dob 6-2-69), is scheduled to be arraigned today at the Foltz Criminal Justice Center, Division 30, on one count of sexual penetration by foreign object and two counts of assault with attempt to commit rape, said Deputy District Attorney Robin Allen of the Elder Abuse Section. He is charged in case No. BA301108.

Rodriguez is currently serving a sentence of 33 years to life in prison for the Sept. 3, 2001 home invasion robbery and sexual assault of a 90-year-old woman in her Mt. Washington home. Paramedics responding to the woman's medical alert button chased Rodriguez down and held him until police arrived.

Three months prior to that attack, a man forced his way into a camper parked in a mobile home park in North Hollywood and sexually assaulted a 68-year-old woman. That assault remained unsolved until DNA evidence submitted through the state's convicted offender DNA Databank recently came back with a cold hit identifying Rodriguez as the suspect, Allen said.

If convicted in the new case, he faces more than 25 years to life in prison.

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Mexican Extradition Proceedings on Schedule

June 13, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

On June 6, 2006, there were published news accounts updating the case of a man who fled to Mexico to escape justice in the murder of a Los Angeles County Sheriff's Deputy, Based upon review of the extradition process, this is the current status of the case.

Extradition proceedings are continuing on schedule in Mexico in the case of Jorge Arroyo Garcia, accused of murdering Sheriff's Deputy David William March four years ago. Garcia, known by many aliases including Armando Garcia, has been in custody in Mexico City since his arrest Feb. 23.

The District Attorney's Office submitted its extradition request to federal officials on April 6, ahead of the required deadline, and the paperwork was submitted to Mexican authorities on April 14. Mexican courts will review the extradition request and could make a recommendation as early as early next month. Although there are no time limits for the Mexican court to complete its review, we are confident that the court is working diligently and the proceedings progressing in a timely manner. After the court makes its recommendation, the Mexican state department has 20 business days to determine whether or not to grant extradition. Garcia then has 15 business days to appeal. If an appeal is filed, the process could be delayed a year or more.

We fully expect that the extradition of Garcia will ultimately be successful and he will be tried in Los Angeles County for Deputy March's murder. Mexican authorities already have extradited several fugitives including Armando Martinez, who fled to Mexico last July after allegedly killing his ex-wife and wounding her boyfriend.

Martinez, charged with murder and attempted murder, was arrested on Nov. 1, 2005, in Tijuana and returned to Los Angeles County in May. His preliminary hearing is pending in Whittier Superior Court.

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Dist. Atty. Cooley Announces New Chief of Bureau of Investigation

June 15, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley announced today the appointment of Dominick J. Rivetti, the D.A.'s Law Enforcement Liaison, as Chief of the Bureau of Investigation to replace retiring Chief Steve Simonian.

Rivetti will become the 11th chief of the D.A.'s Bureau of Investigation when his appointment becomes effective Aug. 3.

Simonian, who was appointed as Chief of the Bureau shortly after Cooley was elected in 2000, announced his retirement on Wednesday. He has served as head of the bureau and its more than 250 investigators for the past 5 1/2 years.

"During Chief Simonian's tenure, the Bureau of Investigation achieved much," Cooley said. "Investigators are well trained, spirited and incredibly professional."

Simonian's departure caps a nearly 40-year career in law enforcement. He was hired as a police officer for the City of Montebello on Dec. 5, 1966 and rose through the ranks, serving as a detective, sergeant, captain and deputy chief. He was appointed Chief of the Montebello Police Department on July 1, 1989.

During his career in law enforcement, Simonian, 60, received numerous awards, including 1979 Officer of the Year, the Medal of Merit and 1988 Manager of the Year. In 1994, he received the California Peace Officers Associations' highest award, Law Enforcement Professional Peace Officer of the Year.

Rivetti, 57, joined the D.A.'s office in 2001 as Law Enforcement Liaison, responsible for facilitating communication between the D.A.'s office and the nearly 24,000 sworn officers throughout Los Angeles County.

Prior to joining the D.A.'s office, Rivetti served 16 years as chief of the San Fernando Police Department. He began his 35-year career in law enforcement as a police officer with the San Fernando Police Department, and later worked as a detective, watch commander, commander of the detective division and patrol commander before becoming police chief.

The Brooklyn native grew up in Los Angeles. He graduated from Monroe High School, attended L.A. Valley College and graduated from the Command College at Cal Poly Pomona. In 1997, he served as president of the Los Angeles County Police Chiefs' Association.

"I've known Steve Cooley for nearly 20 years," Rivetti said Wednesday. "I've loved my experience with the D.A.'s office, and I look forward to many more years of service working with this great organization."

In 1913, the County Board of Supervisors approved the hiring of the first three District Attorney's Office investigators, along with a small support staff. The Bureau of Investigation was officially organized by District Attorney Buron Fitts after he took office in 1928.

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Woman Charged With Murder In Knife Attack

June 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

BELLFLOWER – A 22-year-old Lakewood woman who allegedly broke into a Lakewood house early Friday and attacked four people with a knife, fatally stabbing one, was charged today with murder and attempted murder, the District Attorney's office announced.

Virginia Ann Krall, (dob 1-22-84), is scheduled to be arraigned after 1:30 p. m. in Bellflower Superior Court, Div. 3. She is charged in case No. VA095907 with one count of murder, three counts of attempted murder with the special allegation use of a knife, and one count of first-degree burglary, said Deputy District Attorney Rebecca Noblin. She is being held on \$2.7 million bail.

Krall was staying with friends in the 4300 block of Quigley Avenue when she allegedly broke into a nearby house about 3 a.m. through a window. She began attacking one woman with a knife. The first victim is stabbed several times, but she managed to flee as she tried to warn her grandmother and aunt. Krall then allegedly turned on the first victim's mother, Yolanda Meraz, fatally stabbing her. She also allegedly attacked the grandmother and aunt, stabbing each multiple times, before leaving the house and chasing the first victim down the street. Krall was arrested at the scene by Sheriff's deputies.

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ATTN: News & Assignment Editors Courageous Citizens To Be Honored

June 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

District Attorney Steve Cooley will honor three individuals who exhibited acts of heroism and bravery on Wednesday, June 21, during a Courageous Citizens Awards Ceremony sponsored by the Rotary Club of Westchester. A luncheon begins at noon with the ceremony to follow at 12:45 p.m. The event will be at the Crowne Plaza LAX Hotel, 5985 W. Century Blvd. in Westchester.

Among the honorees are a 35-year-old Manhattan Beach man who subdued a bank robbery suspect and a 48-year-old Los Angeles man who helped catch a murder suspect.

CONTACT: Mark Delgado or Carol Baker, 213-974-7401.

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District Attorney Honors Courageous Citizens

June 21, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Three individuals who exhibited acts of heroism and bravery were honored today by District Attorney Steve Cooley during the Courageous Citizens Awards Ceremony sponsored by the Rotary Club of Westchester.

"They each faced danger, yet acted with courage – even risking their lives – to save others and to pursue justice," Cooley said during a ceremony at the Crowne Plaza LAX Hotel. "They've helped to take dangerous criminals off the streets and made our community that much safer. For that, we applaud our honorees – they are truly heroes in our midst."

The District Attorney's Office created the Courageous Citizen Award in 1985 to commend those individuals who have acted at considerable personal risk to help a victim of crime, assist in the capture of a suspect, or testify in the face of extraordinary pressures.

The awards were presented to recipients nominated by deputy district attorneys. Honorees were (Information on each recipient follows.)

• **Gregory Moore, Los Angeles**

Gregory, 48, was sitting in his parked truck in a market's parking lot on La Tijera Blvd. July 8, 2003, when defendant Terrence Dunson walked up to a parked car and shot the driver with a handgun. The victim tried to drive away, only to crash into a nearby building. Gregory drove after the gunman. When the gunman pointed his weapon at Gregory, our honoree instead drove to the victim's crash site to render aid. Unfortunately, the driver of the car died of his gunshot wounds.

Gregory gave a detailed description of the suspect, identified the suspect from a photo six pack, and testified at his trial. Dunson was convicted and sentenced on July 21, 2005 to 60 years to

life in prison.

- **Edgar Hernandez, Lomita**

On May 6, 2006, 23-year-old Edgar was working at an E-Z Lube in Redondo Beach when he heard a woman yelling for help. The woman, who was with her young daughter, had just had her purse stolen. Edgar saw the thief running with the purse and chased after him. When the suspect tripped, Edgar tackled him and escorted him back to the E-Z Lube where he held him for the police. Defendant William Alexander Lawes has been charged with robbery; the case is pending.

- **Todd Taylor, Manhattan Beach**

As Todd, 35, waited in a bank line on Dec. 16, 2005, he heard screaming outside. When he realized an ATM customer had just been robbed, he chased the suspect, who jumped into a getaway car. The suspect and three passengers in the car tried to fight Todd off, but he didn't let them leave. The struggle attracted several other passers-by, one of whom took the keys out of the cars ignition. Todd grabbed the robber – who was armed with a pistol – and detained him until police arrived.

Defendant Nayan Jemel Kessesee pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 11 years, four months in state prison. Two co-defendants were also convicted.

CONTACT: Mark Delgado or Carol Baker, 213-974-7401.

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ATTN: Assignment Editors EscapingJustice.com Fugitive Captured

June 22, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

A news conference will be held at 2:30 p.m. today in the District Attorney's 18th Floor conference room, 210 W. Temple St., to announce the arrest in Mexico of fugitive Alvaro Jara-Luna, accused of fatally shooting 12-year-old Steven Morales as the boy was playing baseball in front of his home with friends nearly eight years ago. Speakers include District Attorney Steve Cooley, John Clark of the U.S. Marshal's office and Jack Morales, father of the victim. Contact: Sandi Gibbons or Jane Robison, 213-974-3528.



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Accused Killer of 12-Year-Old Boy Caught in Mexico; Faces Extradition

June 22, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Alvaro Jara-Luna, a Los Angeles gang member who fled to Mexico in hopes of escaping prosecution for the murder of a 12-year-old boy eight years ago has been captured and will be returned to this country to stand trial, the District Attorney and U.S. Marshals Service announced today.



District Attorney Steve Cooley and John Clark, chief inspector for the U.S. Marshals Service, said the fugitive was arrested without incident early this morning in Nayarit, Mexico. He was taken to Mexico City, where he will be imprisoned during extradition proceedings.

Cooley noted that today's arrest marked the fifth accused murderer from Los Angeles County who has been arrested for extradition since the Mexican Supreme Court in November 2005 ruled that persons charged with crimes carrying life sentences could be extradited to the United States for trial.

"The U.S. Marshals Service, the Mexican government, members of my office and all law enforcement agencies that have handled this case are to be commended for their hard work to ensure this defendant is tried in Los Angeles, where the crime occurred and where the survivors of the victim live," said Cooley. "I have requested that additional investigators from the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation be assigned to the U.S. Marshals Task Force to enable us to go after more of these fugitives who think they

can escape justice.

“The arrest today and the arrests and extradition proceedings against the others show that they cannot escape justice and the trials that await them in the United States,” he added.

Steven Morales was shot and killed around 7:15 p.m. on Aug. 29, 1998, when he was playing with several other children in front of an apartment building in the 200 block of South Avenue 58. It was a drive-by shooting and the intended victims apparently were members of a rival street gang who were adjacent to where the children were playing.

Two to three rounds were fired at the Avenues gang members near the children, authorities said. Steven was hit in the head and collapsed in the apartment building driveway. He died a day later.

“This has been a long time coming for my kids and me,” said Jack Morales, Steven’s father. “My wife’s dying wish is complete and justice for Steven is coming. The Morales family would like to thank the District Attorney’s office, the U.S. Marshal’s Service, the Mexican Government and everyone else who has helped to make this day happen.”

The case against Jara-Luna was filed about a week after the shooting. He was charged with one count of murder and three counts of attempted murder. The defendant, now 26, fled to Mexico.

Although he is a U.S. citizen, Mexican authorities twice refused to deport Jara-Luna in 2001 and again in 2004.

The Morales case was investigated by the Los Angeles Police Department and representatives also attended the news conference.

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Burbank Man Convicted of Molesting Boy Two Years Ago

June 22, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

PASADENA – A Pasadena Superior Court jury deliberated one hour today before convicting a Burbank man of molesting an 11-year-old boy at his home two years ago, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Oscar Plascencia said Mark Ehlers, 42, faces a minimum of 25 years to life in prison when he returns to court on July 28 for sentencing by trial Judge Candace Beason.

Ehlers was convicted of three felony counts, including forcible lewd act with a child, attempted child molestation and false imprisonment. The jury found true allegations that the defendant had prior convictions and that the victim was tied up during the crimes. The jury also convicted the defendant of 10 misdemeanor counts of possession of child pornography.

Plascencia said the defendant, who lived in the neighborhood, befriended the child and then molested him in early 2004. The defendant was charged that year.

During the two-week trial, the prosecutor called as a witness a man who 23 years ago was molested by the defendant in Florida.

Ehlers remains in custody without bail.

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Father Convicted of Murder In Toddler's Death, Torture

June 26, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A jury today convicted a Lancaster father of torture and murder of his 22-month-old son whose burned body was found in the father's van three years ago, the District Attorneys office announced.

A Los Angeles Superior Court jury of seven women and five men deliberated less than a day before finding Anthony Bill Lopez, 38, guilty of one count each of assault on a child causing death, murder with the special circumstance of torture and child abuse causing death. The District Attorney's office had not sought the death penalty.

Deputy District Attorney Mary Murray with the Family Violence Unit prosecuted the case.

Lopez was charged along with the child's mother, Sylvia Torres Rolon, 40 (dob 11-3-1962), in case No. BA 246618. Rolon is scheduled to be tried next month on the same charges.

Testimony during the trial was that after murdering 22-month-old Isaac on April 21, 2003, Lopez put his body in a tamale pot, filled it with gasoline and set it on fire. Authorities said the child was killed at Rolon's Lancaster condominium and remained there about a day before being taken away by Lopez in his van. He drove to Bassett in the east San Gabriel Valley to visit a friend. The body was found in the van on April 23 and Lopez was arrested and booked the following day. Subsequent investigation by Sheriff's homicide investigators led to Rolon's arrest.

Rolon's three youngest children, including Isaac, were from a relationship with Lopez.

Judge Kathleen Kennedy-Powell is scheduled to sentence Lopez on July 11. He is facing life without the possibility of parole.

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Former Movie Grip Sentenced to Life Prison Term for 2004 Murder, Sexual Assault

June 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

VAN NUYS – A former movie grip was sentenced today to 61 years to life in prison for murdering one woman two years ago and sexually assaulting another during a rampage that ended with capture after he jumped out of a building in Hollywood.

Deputy District Attorney Shellie Samuels of the Major Crimes Division said 38-year-old Paul Alan Ott was sentenced by Van Nuys Superior Court Judge Barry A. Taylor. Taylor presided over Ott's jury trial that ended on May 11.

Jurors convicted Ott of the second-degree murder of Edith I. Mejia, 42, who was stabbed to death and severely beaten on Jan. 18 or 19, 2004. They also convicted him of the Jan. 19, 2004, forcible oral copulation on a second woman on Jan. 19, 2004.

Mejia's body was found on Jan. 19, 2004, in Ott's SUV, which was parked at his Van Nuys apartment building. The body was found after the second victim, identified only as Jane Doe, escaped Ott and went to police.

She had been lured into Ott's vehicle, taken to his apartment building and sexually assaulted. He used a chain saw to threaten her, the prosecutor said.

A manhunt was launched after Mejia's body was discovered. Ott was traced to Hollywood, where he was arrested after jumping out a second-floor window in an attempt to escape police. He was booked on Jan. 22, 2004, and has remained in custody on \$2 million bail.

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Father, Son Charged With Murder In Neighbor Shooting

June 28, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – A father and son were each charged today with murder and attempted murder in the fatal shooting of their Pacoima neighbor on Sunday, the District Attorney's office announced.

Arraignment is scheduled this morning for Alvaro Williamson, 41 (dob 3-27-65), and his son Jacques Williamson, 17 (10-20-88), in San Fernando Superior Court, Dept. S, said Deputy District Attorney Paula Gonzales. They are charged in case No. PA056090 with one count each of murder, attempted murder and assault with a firearm. Alvaro Williamson also is charged with the special allegations of personal use of a handgun and inflicting great bodily injury.

During a dispute, Alvaro Williamson allegedly told his son to get a gun. Alvaro Williamson then allegedly fatally shot and killed his neighbor, Felimon Ramos, before wounding the victim's 19-year-old son. The shootings occurred about 10:20 p.m. Sunday.

Williamson turned himself into police on early Monday morning. His son turned himself into police a few hours later. If convicted, the father is facing more than 50 years to life in prison. His son is facing up to life in prison if convicted.

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Securities Fraud Defendant Arrested on Charges of Allegedly Swindling Investors Out of Nearly \$2 Million

June 28, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Investigators with the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation arrested a Los Angeles man today on a warrant charging him with securities fraud involving Korean-American community investors who lost more than \$1.9 million.

The arrest of Robin K. Cho, 47, outside a Department of Corporations administrative hearing in downtown Los Angeles culminated a three-agency investigation that started after investors complained to authorities.

In a 118-count criminal complaint filed yesterday, Cho was accused of taking the money from 11 investors between 1998 and 2003. The complaint alleges that when investors became suspicious because they were not getting promised payments, Cho told them various stories – most of them blaming the 9/11 terrorist attack -- for failure to pay.

Investors eventually went to authorities, including the Los Angeles Police Department and the District Attorney's office. The Department of Corporations issued a cease and desist order for Cho. The agencies worked together on the investigation, headed by the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation that culminated in yesterday's criminal complaint. Deputy District Attorney Richard A. Lowenstein of the Major Fraud Division will prosecute the case.

After the Department of Corporations issued the cease and desist order against Cho, he appealed, resulting in today's hearing at the Department of Corporations office on Fourth Street in downtown Los Angeles. Cho was arrested without incident outside the hearing room. He was booked and jailed on \$1.9 million bail. He is expected to be arraigned in Los Angeles Superior Court Division 50 tomorrow.

Lowenstein said Cho offered and sold securities to the 11 investors, at least one a college friend, with a guaranteed return of the initial investment at the end of a contact period upon request. He offered 4 percent to 6 percent interest monthly. The prosecutor said the defendant indicated the investments would be low-risk, but instead were high-risk and the defendant lost the money.

In order to keep up interest payments to early investors, he continued to sell securities to new investors, which amounts to a Ponzi scheme, said Lowenstein. Cho, of Los Angeles, operated a company called Citi Travelers Insurance Management, the prosecutor said.

Cho (dob 11-13-1958) is charged in case No. 304944 with 52 counts of violating the California Corporations Code by selling unqualified securities, 52 counts of violating the Corporations Code by selling securities by misrepresentations, 12 counts of grand theft, one count of violating the corporations code by selling securities with intent to defraud and one count of forgery. The counts carry allegations including the taking of more than \$1 million and a White Collar Crime enhancement.

The complaint alleged that \$1,986,000 in investments was involved in the various felony crimes.

Lowenstein said that if Cho is convicted as charged, he faces a possible maximum state prison term of 61 years and eight months.

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D.A. Position on Grand Jury Report on Loss of Taxpayer Dollars to Child Care Fraud

[Download 2005-06 Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury Final Report PDF 5805 kb](#)

June 29, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

District Attorney Steve Cooley commended the 2005-06 Los Angeles County Civil Grand Jury for its report on the millions of taxpayer dollars lost each year to child care fraud because of administrative failures by the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS). He urged Los Angeles County Supervisors quickly implement the recommendations of the grand jury to prevent what the grand jury called a program that "is equivalent to an ATM for thieves."

Cooley said he was gratified the grand jury followed his August 2004 suggestion to investigate and was pleased that many of the recommendations that his office suggested are included in the report released this morning. He said the grand jury recommendations could lead to reforms on the state and national level.

The grand jury estimated that upwards of a half-billion dollars is being lost to child care fraud in Los Angeles County.

"The best and most cost-effective way to prevent this fraud is to detect it during the verification process when an application is made to DPSS," Cooley said. "We investigated and prosecute hundreds of cases each year, but by the time they reach that stage, the damage already has been done."

"Investigation and prosecution are expensive. Stopping the crime before it's committed is not," he added.

Cooley became aware of the enormity of welfare fraud in the 1990s while serving as head deputy of the Welfare Fraud Division. He has provided information to other Civil Grand Juries looking into the welfare system itself.

The 1998-99 Grand Jury, at the request of the D.A.'s office, audited the efforts of DPSS to prevent and combat fraud, leading to recommendations adopted by the Board of Supervisors. The 1999-2000 Civil Grand Jury found the recommendations were not being followed, leading to implementation of a Home Call Visit Program that helps detect fraud.

Editors: D.A. Steve Cooley can be reached for comment. Please contact Joe Scott, Sandi Gibbons or Jane Robison at 213-974-3528.

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Felon Charged With Murder In Tow Truck Theft Pleads Guilty

June 29, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

NORWALK – A parolee who stole a tow truck last October and crashed into a group of people just hours after he was released from prison pleaded guilty today to three counts of murder, the District Attorney's office announced.

Raymond David Bermudez apologized to the families of his victims before he was sentenced to 140 years to life in prison by Judge Philip Hickok, said Deputy District Attorney Ian Phan.

The incident began last Oct. 6, the day Bermudez was released from Salinas State Prison. Shortly after he arrived by bus in Los Angeles he stole a tow truck in Huntington Park. Phan said Bermudez had been drinking throughout the day and had a .16 blood alcohol level five hours after the crash. He first collided with nine vehicles before driving onto a curb and plowing into 11 pedestrians at a bus stop at Vernon and Santa Fe avenues.

Among the three people killed were a husband and wife, 35-year-old Daniel Donrantes and 34-year-old Rosa Carrera, who are survived by seven children.

Bermudez was convicted previously of assault and drug possession.

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Nine Charged in Large-Scale Drug Distribution Operation

May 3, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Felony charges were filed today against nine men in connection with a large-scale drug distribution operation that moved narcotics smuggled in from Mexico to the Midwest and Atlantic Coast, the District Attorney's office announced.

"Los Angeles has become the warehouse of the nation for cocaine," said Deputy District Attorney Sean Carney of the Major Narcotics Division. Carney will prosecute the case.

Seven of the nine defendants were arrested yesterday. Two were arraigned in Los Angeles Superior Court late this afternoon, including a West Covina man who allegedly heads the operation. Two are scheduled to be arraigned tomorrow. Three were arrested in Illinois and face extradition. The remaining two are fugitives.

Carney said all nine defendants are charged in case No. BA302020 with conspiracy to possess cocaine for sale and conspiracy to transport and sell cocaine. The defendants are variously named in the 12 remaining counts of the complaint, including multiple charges of unlawful possession of money or other "negotiable instruments" obtained from the sale of cocaine, possession of marijuana for sale, transportation of marijuana, possession for sale of cocaine, transportation of cocaine and possession of a false compartment "with the intent to store, conceal, smuggle and transport" a controlled substance.

Prison sentences for the most involved defendants could be as much as 40 years, if convicted of the charges, Carney said. He asked that all be held on \$5 million bail.

News accounts of a press conference held yesterday to announce the

arrests, said the case grew out of "Operation Micho," an investigation started in November of last year by state's Bureau of Narcotic Enforcement's Border Interdiction Team. LA IMPACT, the multi-agency drug task force in Los Angeles, also was involved in the investigation.

The defendants are: Steven Montes, 32 (dob 8-11-1973), of West Covina, the alleged head of the operation; Derwin Lashun Webster, 31 (dob 5-18-1974) of Moreno Valley; Enjobul Kareem King, 33 (dob 1-13-1973), of Moreno Valley; Antonio Anguiano, 23 (dob 9-25-1982); Samuel Vivoros Murrillo, 49 (dob 10-8-1956); Agustin Alvarez, 21 (dob 4-4-1985); Omar Cruz, 19 (dob 8-5-1986); Rufino Acevedo, 53 (dob 7-24-1952); and Joel Huerta Nunez, 40 (dob 1-6-1966).

Montes and Webster were arraigned this afternoon. Not guilty pleas were entered on their behalf. They will remain in custody on \$5 million bail. A May 11 date was scheduled for the setting of a preliminary hearing.

King and Anguiano are scheduled to be arraigned tomorrow. Cruz, Acevedo and Nunez were arrested in Dupage, Ill., a suburb of Chicago. The complaint was filed as an extradition request and will go to Dupage County, Ill., he said.

Murrillo and Alvarez are fugitives.

Authorities said yesterday that \$28 million worth of cocaine (353 kilos) was seized, along with 657 pounds of marijuana, more than \$1 million in cash, six handguns, two tractor-trailer rigs and other vehicles were sized.

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Man Charged in Traffic Death of Off-Duty Paramedic Pleads Guilty

May 4, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – A Littlerock man pleaded guilty today to vehicular manslaughter in the September death of a paramedic who was killed when his motorcycle was hit on a rural stretch of highway in Agua Dulce, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Lou Holtz Jr. said Juan Bibinz, 39, entered the unexpected guilty plea before San Fernando Superior Court Judge Ronald S. Coen during his arraignment. Holtz said Bibinz pleaded open to the court, meaning there was no offer from the prosecution.

Judge Coen set sentencing for Monday, May 8. The judge indicated he would sentence Bibinz to four years in state prison.

Authorities said Michael S. Sprinkles, a 37-year-old paramedic and father of two, was killed Sept. 6, 2005 while riding his motorcycle home from an overnight shift at a county fire station in Canyon Country. California Highway Patrol officers said Sprinkles' motorcycle was struck by a car driven by Bibinz. The crash occurred around dawn on Sierra Highway.

Bibinz, who had prior felony convictions and had served time in state prison, was arrested by CHP officers at the scene. If convicted of one felony count of vehicular manslaughter, the defendant could have been sentenced to a maximum six-year state prison term.

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Retired Priest Sentenced to Prison

May 5, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Retired priest Michael Wempe was sentenced today to three years in state prison for his conviction of one count of sexually molesting a child under 16, the District Attorney's office announced.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Curtis Rappe sentenced Wempe to the maximum time in prison and said he must register as a sex offender once he is released from prison.

Wempe was sentenced following victim statements by six people, who spoke about how their lives were shattered because he chose to prey on young male victims.

A jury in February found him guilty of one count of oral copulation of a child under 16. The judge declared a mistrial on three counts of lewd act on a child under 14 and one count of oral copulation of a child under 16 after jurors said they were deadlocked on those counts.

Deputy District Attorney Todd Hicks with the Sex Crimes Division who prosecuted the case said the office will not retry Wempe on the four counts and asked that they be dismissed. Based on the prosecution's motion to dismiss four counts, the defense announced they will not appeal the conviction or seek a new trial.

Wempe was first charged in June 2003 with 42 counts of child sexual molestation, but the case was later dismissed after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that California's law extending the statute of limitations was unconstitutional.

He was rearrested in September 2003 after a new victim, who was 11 when the abuse began in 1990, came forward to authorities.

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Man Sent to Prison for Life in Murders of Two Israelis 3-1/2 Years Ago

May 8, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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LOS ANGELES – A 32-year-old man was ordered today to spend the remainder of his life in prison for the murders of two Israelis, whose bodies were dumped in shallow graves near Barstow 3-1/2 years ago.

Deputy District Attorney Shellie Samuels of the Major Crimes Division said Benjamin Frandsen was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole by Van Nuys Superior Court Judge Martin Herscovitz. Judge Herscovitz presided over Frandsen's trial, which ended with a jury in November convicting him of the murders.

The jury also found true the special circumstance of multiple murder. The District Attorney's office had decided not to seek the death penalty against Frandsen.

Frandsen and two others were charged. One pleaded guilty to false imprisonment and was sentenced. The other, Shane Huang, 37, was convicted of the same charges by a jury in a separate trial a year ago. He has not yet been sentenced, although a hearing is scheduled for June 1. Huang also faces imprisonment for life.

Ben Wertzberger and Adar' Ne'eman, childhood friends from Tel Aviv, were killed sometime between Dec. 2 and Dec. 3, 2002, at a Canoga Park house rented by Huang. Huang grew marijuana at the house on DeSoto Avenue, authorities said.

Wertzberger, who moved from Israel to California seeking work as a disk jockey, had lived at the Canoga Park house with Huang's blessing. Prosecutors said he took care of the marijuana until he moved to Las Vegas.

In late 2002, Ne'eman came from Tel Aviv to visit his childhood friend,

Wertzberger. The pair ended up in Los Angeles and went to the Canoga Park house. Huang, fearing they were trying to steal his marijuana, called two friends – Frandsen and Turner.

Wertzberger and Ne'eman were killed at the Canoga Park house, where they were beaten over a two-day period, authorities said.

The bodies of the men, both 24, were taken to a campground near Interstate 15 and Afton Canyon Road about 40 miles northeast of Barstow. They were buried in shallow graves. The bodies were not discovered until September 2003.

At the time the bodies were found, it was believed that Wertzberger and Ne'eman were kidnapped from Las Vegas, where they were last seen. The FBI investigated the case initially. A federal indictment charging kidnapping was returned against Huang and Frandsen on Sept. 26, 2003.

Further investigation showed that there was not kidnapping and the murders occurred in Los Angeles County. The case eventually was presented to the District Attorney's office, which charged Huang, Frandsen and Nicholas Turner, 31, on June 22, 2004.

Turner pleaded guilty in January 2005 of two counts of false imprisonment. He currently is serving a probationary term.

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San Pedro Man Charged with Felony Firearms Violations

May 9, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(213) 974-3525

LONG BEACH – A San Pedro man who was arrested over the weekend after allegedly firing a weapon into the air was charged today with illegally discharging and possessing firearms.

Salvador Rodriguez, 47 (dob 1-7-1959), is expected to appear for arraignment at 2 p.m. today in Department J of Long Beach Superior Court, 415 W. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach. He has been in custody since his arrest in San Pedro on Saturday.

Rodriguez is charged in case No. NA070089 with one count of discharge of a firearm with gross negligence, one count of possession of a machine gun and eight counts of possession of an assault weapon. The machine gun charge carries a sentencing enhancement that probation not be granted "except in an unusual case where the interest of justice would be best served" (Section 1203 (e)(11) of the California Penal Code).

The weapons were listed in the complaint as a Springfield Sar 8, an EA Company Model J5, a PWA Model Commando, A Model AK 47, a Norinco Model AK 47, a FMAP Model 1762, A Model SKS and a Ruger Mini 14.

The eight assault rifles were in the garage of his home in San Pedro, authorities said. The machine gun was in his closet.

Deputy District Attorney Carol Najera of the Long Beach office, who filed the case, recommended bail of \$230,000. The case has not yet been assigned to a prosecutor.

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Former Movie Grip Convicted of Murdering One Woman, Sexually Assaulting Another

May 11, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

VAN NUYS – A former movie grip was convicted today of murdering one woman and sexually assaulting another during a rampage that ended with his capture in Hollywood after his SUV containing the nude body of the murder victim was discovered parked at his Van Nuys apartment building.

A Van Nuys Superior Court jury deliberated about a day and a half before reaching verdicts late yesterday. The verdicts were sealed and read today in the court of trial Judge Barry A. Taylor. The jury found Paul Alan Ott not guilty of additional sexual assault charges, most stemming from a Jan. 15, 2004, attack on a third woman who came forward after the defendant was arrested.

Deputy District Attorney Shellie Samuels of the Major Crimes Division said the 38-year-old defendant faces a possible maximum sentence of 61 years to life in prison. Sentencing is scheduled for June 27.

After hearing about two weeks of testimony, jurors convicted Ott of one count of second-degree murder with the use of a knife and one count of forcible oral copulation with the use of a circular saw as a weapon. The murder occurred Jan. 18 or 19, 2004, and the sexual assault on Jan. 19, 2004.

The body of Edith I. Mejia, 42, was found in Ott's SUV on Jan. 19, 2004. That was the same day Ott lured the sexual assault victim, identified only as Jane Doe, into his vehicle, drove her to his apartment and sexually assaulted her. The woman escaped and went to police.

Ott was arrested after he jumped from the second floor of a Hollywood building. He was booked on Jan. 22, 2004, and has remained in custody on \$2 million bail.

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Man Convicted of Murdering Driver for Load of Frozen Chicken

May 12, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles Superior Court jury convicted a Los Angeles man today of murdering a commercial truck driver from Alabama six years ago for a load of frozen chicken.

The jury determined it was a first-degree murder and found true the special circumstance of robbery murder. The jury also found true the defendant, 30-year-old Rolando Rodriguez, personally used a gun to commit the crime.

The case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Cathryn Brougham of the Major Crimes Division.

Rodriguez, whom authorities identified as an 18th Street Gang member with the moniker of "Spanky," is scheduled to be sentenced on July 14 by trial Judge Michael Johnson. Since the District Attorney's office opted not to seek the death penalty, Rodriguez will be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Walter Dow, the 56-year-old victim, drove the Bama West Trucking tractor-trailer rig to Los Angeles in July 2000 with a load of frozen chickens for a wholesaler. On July 3, 2000, his body was discovered at parking lot in the 700 block of East 59th Street in Los Angeles. He had been shot three times.

Dow's truck was found in South Los Angeles several days later. It had been separated from the trailer and intentionally burned. The empty trailer had been found in the Florence area a day after discovery of Dow's body.

Rodriguez, a parolee, was arrested and convicted of an unrelated crime later in 2000. He was imprisoned.

In April 2004, after a painstaking Los Angeles Police Department

investigation, the District Attorney's office filed the murder case against Rodriguez.

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Former Teacher at Chatsworth School Charged with Molesting Six Boys

May 16, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

VAN NUYS – A former computer teacher at a private school in Chatsworth was charged today with molesting six boys under the age of 14 over a period of several years.

Deputy District Attorney Cynthia Meagher-Walker said arraignment for Thomas Edward Jukes, 32 (dob 2-22-1974), is scheduled for May 26 in Van Nuys Superior Court Division 100.

Jukes was charged in case No. LA052403 with four felony counts – two of continuous sexual abuse of a child under the age of 14 and two of lewd act upon a child under the age of 14. He also was charged with three misdemeanor counts of child annoying.

The defendant was arrested on April 27 by the FBI's Sexual Assault Felony Enforcement (SAFE) team and was freed on \$100,000 bond. He appeared today before Van Nuys Superior Court Commissioner Thomas E. Grodin, who increased bail to the \$535,000 recommended by the District Attorney's office. Jukes was remanded into custody.

When Jukes' arrest was announced by the FBI in April, a press release issued by that office said the investigation of Jukes began when a parent complained of an e-mail sent to a child. The FBI release said Jukes was relieved from his teaching job at Sierra Canyon School. He also has been a coach at the Valley Christian Athletic Association, the FBI said.

Meagher-Walker said that although Jukes was a teacher at the time of the crimes, none of the molestations occurred at the school.

The FBI's SAFE Team is a task force focusing on sex crimes against children. Members include the Los Angeles Police Department, the Los

Angeles and Orange county Sheriffs' departments, the state Department of Justice's Bureau of Investigation, the California Highway Patrol, the U.S. Attorney's office and the District Attorney's Office. Criminal cases stemming from task force investigations can be tried in either state or federal courts, depending on the specific crimes alleged.

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Ricky Manning, Two Others Charged with Assault

May 18, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Former Carolina Panthers cornerback Ricky Manning Jr. and two former UCLA football players were charged today with assault after they allegedly attacked a man in a Denny's restaurant in Westwood on April 23, the District Attorney's office announced.

Manning, 25 (dob 11-18-80), is scheduled to be arraigned after 1:30 p.m. at the Airport Court, Dept. 144, said Deputy District Attorney Karen Murcia. He is charged in case No. SA060294 with one count of assault by means likely to produce great bodily injury. He was released earlier on \$30,000 bail.

Charged in the same case are Tyler Ebell, (dob 6-4-83), and Maurice Christopher Drew, (dob 3-23-85). Ebell and Drew are expected to surrender and be arraigned at a later date, Murcia said. Bail will be \$30,000 each.

The three former UCLA football players allegedly exchanged words with a customer in a Denny's in the 1000 block of Tiverton Avenue in the early morning hours on April 23. They allegedly attacked the man and then left the restaurant. Manning was arrested by LAPD officers a short time later.

Manning, who recently signed with the Chicago Bears, is on probation for a similar assault in April 2002. If convicted, he faces up to four years in state prison.

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Couple Charged in Death of Infant

May 19, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – The mother of a newborn girl found dead in a trash bin was charged today with murder and assault on a child causing death and her boyfriend was charged with being an accessory, the District Attorney's office announced.

Jacquelin Linaras, 22 (dob 7-22-83), is scheduled to be arraigned after 1:30 p.m. in San Fernando Superior Court, Dept. 130, said Deputy District Attorney Carolyn McNary. Linaras is charged in case No. PA055285. She is being held without bail.

Charged in the same case is Jose de la Cruz Depaz, 43 (dob 3-19-63). He is being held on \$1 million bail and is also scheduled to be arraigned after 1:30 p.m. in the same court.

Linaras allegedly killed the newborn girl on May 1 shortly after giving birth and had Depaz throw the body in a trash bin near their home in the Polynesian Mobile Home Park in Santa Clarita. The body was discovered May 2 by a resident searching for recyclables.

If convicted, Linaras is facing 25 years to life in prison. Depaz is facing up to three years in state prison.

Under California law, parents or legal guardians can drop off unwanted children within 72 hours of birth to designated sites such as fire stations or hospital emergency rooms with no fear of arrest or prosecution.

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Man Charged in Attempted Kidnappings of Three Hawthorne Girls

May 19, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Kidnapping and attempted rape charges were filed today against a 22-year-old man in connection with assaults on three teenage girls in Hawthorne since April 24.

William Ernest Hernandez, 22 (dob 4-7/1985), of Hawthorne, was scheduled to appear later today in Division 144 of the Los Angeles Airport Branch Court for arraignment. He is charged with two counts of kidnapping to commit rape, one count of attempted kidnapping to commit rape and two counts of attempted forcible rape. If convicted, Hernandez faces a possible prison term of life with the possibility of parole. Bail was recommended at just over \$3.1 million.

The defendant was arrested by Hawthorne police on Wednesday after he was spotted standing near a vehicle matching the description of the one used in the assaults, authorities said.

According to the criminal complaint, the attempted kidnappings occurred on April 24 and the kidnappings on May 4 and May 8. In each instance, authorities said, the girls who range in age from 14 to 18 were approached by a man in a car. Two of the girls were forced at gunpoint into the car, but were let go after the vehicle had gone only a short distance. In the first attack on April 24, the victim refused to get into the car.

In a statement to the media on Wednesday, Hawthorne police said all the victims had personal belongings taken from them.

The case will be prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Liliana Gonzalez of the Sex Crimes Division.

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Jury Convicts Former Neighbor of Murdering Cerritos Woman and Her Housekeeper

May 22, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

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(213) 974-3525

NORWALK – A Norwalk Superior Court jury convicted a Cerritos man today of murdering his neighbor and her housekeeper in 1992 in a crime that was not charged until after the murder weapon was found 10 years later.

Deputy District Attorney John Lewin said the jury deliberated two days before convicting 37-year-old Derrick Charles Snowden of the April 30, 1992, killings of Mayada Porras, 49, and her housekeeper, Anna Junco, 27.

Lewin said Snowden was convicted of two counts of first-degree murder with the special circumstances of murder of a witness and multiple murder. It also found that Snowden personally used a revolver to kill the women. The jury found untrue the special circumstance of murder during a burglary.

Snowden is scheduled for sentencing on June 12 by Norwalk Superior Court Judge Thomas I. McKnew Jr., who presided over the trial. Since the District Attorney's office opted not to seek the death penalty, Snowden is expected to be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Lewin said Snowden was a neighbor of Porras in the gated community where the murders occurred. His late father had been a Los Angeles County Sheriff's deputy. Seven years before the killings, the prosecutor said, Porras was a witness against Snowden in a burglary case.

The bodies of Porras and Junco were found by Porras' daughter after she could not reach her mother by telephone. Porras was found in the upstairs master bedroom; Junco on the floor of the garage. Both women were shot multiple times.

A car belonging to Porras was taken, driven to Long Beach, filled with gas

and returned to the gated neighborhood. It was found about two blocks from the murder scene. Its California plates had been replaced with Nevada license plates traced to a transportation company owned by the defendant's late father, Lewin said.

But the murder weapon was not found. It was recovered in 2002 at the Snowden family home across the street from the Porras residence. Lewin said the weapon was a .357 Magnum service revolver belonging to the defendant's father, who died of cancer in 1988.

Murder charges were filed against Snowden in December 2003. He has remained in custody without bail since his arrest just before the case was filed.

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Attn: Assignment & News Editors Environmental Scholarships

May 22, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

The District Attorney's office will present environmental scholarships to 11 students from five Los Angeles County high schools during an awards ceremony on Tuesday, May 23.

The ceremony begins at 9 a.m. at Bell Gardens High School Library, 6119 Agra Street.

Students from Schurr, Pioneer, Montebello, El Rancho and Bell Gardens high schools will receive awards during the 14th annual Los Angeles County District Attorney Environmental Scholarship awards ceremony. G. Steve Simonian, chief of the D.A.'s Bureau of Investigation, will present the awards.

Since 1991, the District Attorney's Office has awarded more than 279 scholarships to local students totaling more than \$173,000. The program is funded by a nearly \$270,000 settlement in a criminal case against Grow Group, Inc.

CONTACT: Carol Baker, Wayne Mack, (213) 974-7401.

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Two Charged in Alleged Internet Extortion Plot Uncovered During Task Force Sting

May 24, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Two young New York men arrested in an Electronic Crimes Task Force undercover sting involving an alleged plot to extort money from the operators of a popular web site face criminal charges in Los Angeles that could result in state prison terms for both if convicted, the District Attorney's office announced today.

Shaun Harrison, 18 (dob 6-3-1987) and Saverio F (cq, no period) Mondelli, 19 (dob 2-13-1987), were arrested on May 19 by members of the task force when the Suffolk County, N.Y., pair traveled to Los Angeles to meet with what the defendants believed were MySpace.com employees. The MySpace employees were undercover investigators from the task force.

Deputy District Attorney Jeffrey McGrath of the High Tech Crime Unit charged the pair with two felony counts involving alleged illegal computer access (Sections 502(c) (1) and 502(c) (2) of the California Penal Code). Each also was charged in case No. BA303198 with one count of sending a threatening letter for extortion and attempted extortion. If convicted, each man could be sentenced to state prison for more than four years.

Both men were arraigned late yesterday in Los Angeles Superior Court. Not guilty pleas were entered on their behalf. Their preliminary hearing was scheduled for June 5.

McGrath said although they had been held on \$250,000 bail each, he agreed that the bail could be reduced to \$35,000 each if the defendants agreed to remain in Los Angeles while the case is pending. Both listed New York state addresses when arrested.

The prosecutor said the men agreed and their bail was reduced. Both currently remain in custody.

The alleged crimes began late last year after the defendants, computer programmers who operated a web site called myspaceplus.com out of Medford, N.Y., took advantage of vulnerabilities they found in the MySpace.com web site. McGrath said the pair developed a computer code that enabled them to get personal information on MySpace users.

MySpace went to the task force earlier this year after its technicians discovered the code and blocked it. During the course of the investigation, authorities said, threats were made that unless \$150,000 was paid, a new, unbreakable code would be released.

By this time, the task force had set up the sting. So instead of meeting with MySpace officials late last week, the defendants met with undercover officers from the U.S. Secret Service and the Los Angeles District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation.

The Electronic Crimes Task Force is a joint federal-local effort to go after those involved in high tech crime, including all types of internet crime. A great deal of its work is devoted to identity theft, the nation's fastest growing crime.

The Secret Service and Los Angeles County District Attorney's office are involved in the task force, as well as the Los Angeles Police Department, the Sheriff's Department and other agencies in the area.

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EDITORS – For more information on the task force, contact Mark Porter, 213-533-4691

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Nearly Half-Million-Dollar Fine in D.A. Real Estate Fraud Case Goes Into County Coffer

May 24, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles County General Fund has been paid more than \$499,000 in fines from a real estate fraud prosecution against a mother-daughter-son team working in the San Fernando and Santa Clarita valleys, the District Attorney's Real Estate Fraud Unit announced today.

The fine, which was paid yesterday as part of the case disposition, came after the defendants pleaded no contest in San Fernando Superior Court. As part of their fines, the defendants also paid \$46,056.60 to the Sheriff's Department and \$12,061.03 to the District Attorney's Office to cover costs of investigation and prosecution of the case.

The defendants pleaded in April and were sentenced. The mother was sentenced to a four-year state prison term. Her son and daughter were placed on supervised probation and given credit for time already served in the county jail. During their 2-1/2-years on probation, the defendants cannot work in the real estate business.

Deputy District Attorney David Fleck of the Real Estate Fraud Unit said Joyce Vachon, 66, worked as a real estate loan processor for several real estate brokers in the area. Her daughter, Jeanne Vachon, 44, was an underwriter for a real estate lending firm, while the son, Henry, 43, invested and resold real estate.

Fleck said the defendants profited from the rising real estate market illegally by using "straw buyers" to purchase property, then "flipping" the homes to make a profit. Straw buyers are people with good credit whose names are used - sometimes without the person's knowledge - to buy property. Flipping, which is the resale of the property to make a profit in a rising real estate market, is not illegal unless fraud is involved, the prosecutor added.

A fourth defendant in the case, a "straw buyer" used by the defendants to acquire property, pleaded to misdemeanor charges and was placed on summary probation after a 180-day jail term.

When Fleck filed the case earlier this year, he alleged that it was an aggravated white collar crime. If the aggravated white collar crime is found to be true, the law mandates that fines generated from certain fraud cases be paid directly to the county, the prosecuting agency and the investigating agency.

Fleck said when the defendants pleaded no contest, they also admitted they committed a fraud and a pattern of related felony conduct to take more than \$500,000. This brought into play the aggravated white collar crime enhancement.

The prosecutor said Joyce Vachon pleaded no contest to grand theft and forgery charges. Her son and daughter pleaded no contest to grand theft and money laundering charges.

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EDITORS: Deputy District Attorney David Fleck may be reached at 213-580-3325.

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Former Attorney Pleads in Embezzlement Cases

May 30, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A former attorney who was charged in two separate cases with embezzling from estates of nine victims and also from military veterans too disabled to handle their own affairs pleaded guilty today and was sentenced to prison, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Decio Rangel Jr. of the Justice System Integrity Division said 47-year-old Charles Brian Smith (dob 10-29-58) pleaded guilty to multiple counts including conspiracy, perjury, grand theft by embezzlement and theft from an elder. He was immediately sentenced by Judge Fred Wapner to three years, four months in prison and ordered to pay a total of \$740,187 in restitution.

Smith pleaded guilty in both cases.

In the first case filed against Smith -- BA 282965 filed in June 2005 -- the former attorney was charged with embezzling more than \$750,000 from the estates of nine victims.

He was out on bail when a second case was filed on April 12 naming Smith and Anne L. Chavis, 72 (dob 10-15-1933), who served as conservator for six veterans. She also served as a special administrator for a probate estate and Smith was the attorney. The complaint alleged the theft was more than \$50,000.

Authorities said Smith and Chavis allegedly conspired to embezzle at least \$92,000 from trust accounts of the veterans and the probate estate between 1998 and 2003. The victims included veterans from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force.

The lead investigative agency on the case was the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General. The District Attorney's Bureau of

Investigation also was involved.

A preliminary hearing has not been set for Chavis.

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Former Manhattan Beach School Board Member Pleads in Illegal Public Funds Case

May 30, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

TORRANCE – A former Manhattan Beach school board member pleaded guilty today to illegally using public money for political purposes – a felony violation of the California Education Code.

Deputy District Attorney Juliet Schmidt of the Public Integrity Division said Mary Agnes Rogers was ordered to pay \$1,027 in restitution, fines and penalties. She also was placed on three years of supervised probation by Torrance Superior Court Judge Thomas R. Sokolov.

Schmidt said the defendant cannot hold public office for three years.

Rogers, 63, of Manhattan Beach, was charged earlier this year with using public money to buy gifts for people who worked on bond and parcel tax measures designed to increase school funding.

The charges stemmed from several bond measures and parcel tax measures between 2000 and 2003 to increase school funding. Rogers was a board member at the time.

Schmidt said Rogers sought reimbursement from Manhattan Beach Unified School district for gifts to members of a bond committee and those who supported the measures.

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Teen Charged with Murder in Saturday Chase

May 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SYLMAR – A 17-year-old Central Los Angeles girl was charged today with murder and assault in connection with a car chase Saturday that killed a 22-year-old Northridge woman and critically injured an off-duty firefighter, the District Attorney's office announced.

The minor (dob 3-15-89), whose name is being withheld because of her age, was charged in petition No. PJ38803, said Deputy District Attorney Ron Smalstig. The District Attorney's office will seek to have the minor tried as an adult. As part of the petition, the court was asked to rule that the minor is unfit to be tried as a juvenile.

The teen allegedly confronted 22-year-old Shayla Phillips of Northridge about 5:30 a.m. Saturday as she was leaving for work. When Phillips drove off in her Lexus SUV, she was allegedly followed by a car driven by the 17-year-old girl. During the nearly 45-minute chase, Phillips called 911 to report she was being pursued. Phillips was killed when she ran a red light as she tried to evade her alleged attacker and her SUV collided with the firefighter's pickup truck and an MTA bus.

Arraignment is scheduled for some time after 8:30 a.m. Thursday at San Fernando Valley Juvenile Court, Dept. 279. She is being held without bail.

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Man Charged with Manslaughter in Weekend Boating Accident

May 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – A 46-year-old man was charged today with manslaughter in connection with Monday's fatal boating accident at Pyramid Lake in northern Los Angeles County, the District Attorney's office announced.

John Galvan, (dob 10-6-59), is scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in San Fernando Superior Court, Dept. 130. He is charged in case No. PA055379 with one count of vessel manslaughter with alcohol, said Deputy District Attorney Kent Cahill. He is being held on \$50,000 bail.

Galvan allegedly was piloting a boat and towing a large tube attached by a long rope carrying the victim, Edward Gomez, officials said. When Galvan, who allegedly had been drinking, swerved to avoid hitting another boat, the tube carrying Gomez crashed head-on into the hull of the other boat.

If convicted, Galvan faces up to four years in state prison.

jr

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Two Charged with Stealing More Than \$250,000 from Los Angeles County in Workers' Compensation Insurance Fraud Scheme

May 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Two men were charged today with conspiracy, grand theft and other crimes in connection with the theft of more than a quarter of a million of taxpayer dollars in a year-long workers' compensation insurance fraud scheme.

The case, filed by the District Attorney's Healthcare Fraud Division, alleged the defendants took the money through fraudulent medical billings. Not only were the billings for medical services not performed, prosecutors said, they were in the names of nearly 200 county employees who reportedly were unaware they were being listed as "patients."

Charged in case No. BA303367 are Samvel (cq) Melkonyan, 48 (dob 2-24-1958), of Glendale, and Tigran Ghalmukhyan, 34 (dob 3-1-1972), of Van Nuys. Melkonyan, who was arrested on Friday, was expected to be arraigned this afternoon in Division 30 of Los Angeles Superior Court. A warrant was issued for Ghalmukhyan's arrest.

The defendants were charged with conspiracy to commit grand theft, workers' compensation insurance fraud, insurance fraud and identity theft. They also were charged with grand theft, workers' compensation insurance fraud, insurance fraud and identity theft in the 54-count criminal complaint. The complaint alleged the theft was more than \$150,000.

If convicted, each defendant faces a possible maximum sentence of 40 years and four months in state prison. Deputy District Attorneys Edward A. Miller and David A. Berton of the Healthcare Fraud Division recommended bail of \$2 million for each man.

Miller said that after the men somehow obtained the names of the county

employees, they issued claims to the county for tests ostensibly administered to by Laura Diagnostic Center, Calypso Diagnostic Center and Mission Diagnostic Center. A doctor listed as the referring physician for most of the claims reported he never ordered the tests, the prosecutor said.

One of the businesses – Mission – was located in a residential apartment complex in Van Nuys. The other two were in business complexes in North Hollywood and Van Nuys. Search warrants were served at various locations on Friday as part of the investigation by the Sheriff's Department.

Sheriff's investigators contacted more than 100 of the employees who purportedly were tested, but none had gone to the locations listed or received any of the tests, authorities said.

The billings were from June 2005 to May 2006. The county's workers' compensation program paid out about \$260,000 for the alleged bogus claims.

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Man Charged with Murder in Fatal Stabbing of Adult Daughter

April 3, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

POMONA – A Hesperia man was charged with murder today in connection with the weekend fatal stabbing of his adult daughter in Pomona, the District Attorney's office announced.

Norberto Hernandez Sr., 69 (dob 12-8-1936), was charged with one count of murder with the allegation that he used a knife to commit the crime. The defendant, who faces a possible maximum 26-year-to-life prison term if convicted, is being held on \$1 million bail.

Hernandez is scheduled to be arraigned tomorrow in Department F of Pomona Superior Court.

He is accused of killing his 45-year-old daughter, Anna Hernandez, on Saturday. She was attacked with a kitchen knife at a home in the 400 block of Foothill Boulevard in Pomona early Saturday evening, police said. She was airlifted to County-USC Medical Center in Los Angeles, where she died.

Pomona police said they arrested Hernandez at the home of another family member after the stabbing.

Deputy District Attorney Amy Gladini of the Pomona office was assigned to prosecute the case.

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Boxer Sentenced in Bludgeoning Death of Sportswriter

April 5, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Professional boxer James Butler Jr. was sentenced today to more than 29 years in prison for the October 2004 fatal beating of a freelance sportswriter at the victim's Hollywood apartment, the District Attorney's office announced.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michael Pastor ordered Butler, 33, to pay \$17,853 in funeral and burial expenses to the family of 29-year-old Sam Kellerman, who was bludgeoned to death. Judge Pastor ordered Butler to pay \$11,882 to the firm that manages the apartment where the killing occurred. Butler additionally was ordered to pay \$10,000 to the state Victim's Restitution Fund.

Before sentencing, Deputy District Attorney Bjorn Dodd made a brief statement on behalf of the victim's family, who were not present in court. "The family wanted to state, 'We love you, Sam,'" Dodd said.

Butler, known professionally as "The Harlem Hammer," last month pleaded guilty to voluntary manslaughter and arson and admitted a prior strike for a conviction in New York. Butler admitted using a hammer to bludgeon Kellerman to death and then setting fire inside the victim's apartment.

Kellerman, the brother of Fox sportscaster Max Kellerman, had let Butler stay at this apartment while Butler was trying to revive his boxing career. Kellerman's body was discovered in his apartment on Oct. 17, 2004.

The victim's 1993 Cadillac Seville was discovered parked near UCLA and further investigation led to Butler's arrest by LAPD homicide detectives.

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Van Nuys Man Charged with Murder

April 6, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

VAN NUYS – A felon suspected of strangling his girlfriend in her Van Nuys apartment was charged today with one count of murder and one count of attempted robbery, the District Attorney's office announced.

Arraignment for Jonathon (CQ) Arthur Hendler, 36 (dob 10-1-69), is scheduled for some time Friday in Van Nuys Superior Court, Dept. 100, said Deputy District Attorney Paul Sergiojan. He is charged in case No. LA052058. Hendler was being held on \$2.05 million bail.

Hendler allegedly strangled 38-year-old Beverly Ann Kass-Lucitt (CQ), whose body was discovered about 4 p.m. Sunday in an apartment in the 16700 block of Sherman Way. LAPD detectives said Hendler called three friends and told them he had killed his girlfriend. One of the friends, a rabbi, reported the crime to police.

Hendler allegedly tried to rob a bank in Culver City on Tuesday shortly before he was arrested. He was on parole at the time for robbery. If convicted, this would be his third strike.

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Teen Charged as Adult in Alleged Columbine-Style Plan

April 10, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LANCASTER – A 17-year-old boy is scheduled to be arraigned today on conspiracy and possession of bomb-making ingredients for allegedly planning a Columbine-style attack on Valentine's Day at Quartz Hill High School, the District Attorney's office announced.

Johnny Alvarez Casas, (dob 4-22-1988), will be tried as an adult after a Sylmar Juvenile Court judge last week found that he was unfit to be tried as a juvenile. Casas was charged late Friday in case No. MA034945 with one count of conspiracy to commit murder one count of possession of ingredients to make a destructive device, said Deputy District Attorney Daniel Akemon. He is being held without bail.

Casas is scheduled to be arraigned today in Antelope Valley Superior Court, Dept. A01.

Casas and a 15-year-old boy allegedly acquired bomb-making instructions off the Internet and were planning a Valentine's Day 2006 attack that included shooting students and using improvised explosive devices. They were arrested in December after a girl contacted a Quartz Hill High vice principal.

The second youth, (dob 1-18-1990), charged in case No. MJ12015 with one count each of conspiracy to commit murder and making a criminal threat, remains in custody. His adjudication hearing, the equivalent to a court trial for an adult, is set for April 18 in Lancaster Superior Court, Dept. 285.

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Father Charged with Murder in Fatal Fire

April 14, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A 54-year-old man suspected of placing his children inside his SUV and setting it ablaze, killing both children, was charged today with two counts of murder with special circumstances, making it a potential death penalty case, the District Attorney's office announced.

Dae Kwon Yun, (dob 6-25-51), was charged in case No. BA 301114 with the special circumstances of multiple murders and murder during commission of an arson, said Deputy District Attorney Todd Hicks with the Family Violence Division. Yun remains hospitalized. He is being held without bail. Arraignment is pending due to his medical condition.

Yun was seriously burned after allegedly placing his 11-year-old daughter and 10-year-old son in an SUV and setting it on fire in a downtown alley on April 2. Prosecutors will decide whether to seek the death penalty at a later date.

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Felon Charged with Evading Police Following Chase

April 14, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

VAN NUYS – A 46-year-old Los Angeles man on probation was charged today with evading police, possession of a deadly weapon and hit-and-run driving after police allegedly found police equipment in a car he was driving, the District Attorney's office announced.

Todd Dereck (CQ) Taylor, (dob 2-16-60), is scheduled to be arraigned some time before noon in Van Nuys Superior Court, Dept. 100. He is charged in case No. LA052132 and is being held on \$160,000 bail, said Deputy District Attorney William Ryder.

Taylor is suspected of leading police on a chase through Sherman Oaks and slamming his Crown Victoria into a BMW on Wednesday. After he was arrested, police allegedly found a replica 9mm handgun along with several pieces of police equipment. In addition to evading police, he's charged with three counts of hit-run driving, one count of resisting arrest, and one count of possession of a deadly weapon.

If convicted, he faces up to 10 years in state prison. He was on probation for a felon in possession of ammunition.

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Swede Charged in Ferrari Case

April 17, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A 44-year-old Swedish businessman and felon was charged today with multiple counts of embezzlement, grand theft and other charges in connection with the alleged theft of a collection of expensive and exotic sports cars, including a Ferrari that crashed in Malibu, the District Attorney's office announced.

Bo Stefan M. Eriksson, (dob 12-14-61), is scheduled to be arraigned after 1:30 p.m. today in Division 30 at the Foltz Criminal Justice Center, said Deputy District Attorney Steven Sowders, head deputy of the Auto Insurance Fraud Division. Eriksson is charged in case No. BA301191 with three counts each of embezzlement and grand theft, one count of a felon in possession of a gun and two counts of misdemeanor of DUI. He is being held on \$5 million bail.

Eriksson, a former executive with Gizmondo, a European video game company, is suspected of importing two Enzo Ferraris and a rare Mercedes – with a total value of \$3.8 million. Sowders said the cars are owned by British financial institutions and leased to Eriksson, and the lease agreement did not allow Eriksson to take the cars out of Great Britain.

On Feb. 21, Eriksson allegedly was driving the red Enzo Ferrari at speeds of more than 100 mph when it slammed into a power pole on Pacific Coast Highway, totaling the \$1 million vehicle. Eriksson is charged with misdemeanor DUI and driving with blood alcohol higher than .08 percent or higher at the time of the crash.

During a sheriff's search of his Bel-Air home, a handgun was discovered in the home. The gun charge stems from Eriksson's conviction in Sweden of counterfeiting in the early 1990s.

If convicted, he faces up to 14 years in state prison. Deputy District Attorney

Tamara Hall has been assigned to the case.

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Statement by District Attorney Steve Cooley on U.S. Supreme Court Ruling on Archdiocese Records

April 17, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

“This is a decisive victory for victims of clerical abuse. It’s unfortunate that it took four years of litigation to reach this day of justice for victims. The U.S. Supreme Court’s denial to review this matter establishes an important principle that evidence of criminality be made available to appropriate authorities.”

NOTE: The U.S. Supreme Court today denied certiorari by the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Los Angeles. The decision means Cardinal Roger Mahony must comply with Los Angeles County grand jury subpoenas seeking the internal church records of two former priests accused of sexually abusing children.

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Three Life-Without-Parole Terms for Man Convicted of Brothers' Murders

April 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Marina del Ray man convicted of murdering the sons of a Los Angeles police officer after stealing their insurance settlement was sentenced today to three consecutive life-without-parole prison terms.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michael Johnson imposed the sentence after denying a motion for a new trial for Timothy Mack, 50. Johnson presided over Mack's jury trial, which ended on March 21 with first-degree and special circumstances murder convictions.

Mack was convicted of murdering Howard Byrdsong, 20, and his 18-year-old brother, Jontrae, on June 6, 2001. The jury also convicted him of the unrelated murder of Norman Fields on April 17, 2000. The jury found true the special circumstances of murder for financial gain, lying in wait, murder of a potential witness and multiple murder. The District Attorney's office decided before trial that it would not seek the death penalty against Mack.

Deputy District Attorney Ron Goudy of the Organized Crime Division said Mack and Angela Wallace, a former Beverly Hills attorney, embezzled \$380,000 from a life insurance settlement awarded the Byrdsong brothers. The settlement was in connection with the death of the brothers' mother, Shiree Arrant, an LAPD officer who died of natural causes in June 2000.

The Byrdsong brothers never received any money from the settlement and had complained to prosecutors in May 2001. A month later, a man dressed as a postal worker knocked on the door of a home where they were staying in Inglewood and fatally shot the young men.

Goudy prosecuted and convicted Mack and Wallace of the embezzlement. Mack was serving a six-year prison term for that conviction when he was charged with the murders last year.

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Attn: Assignment, Planning Editors

April 21, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

- Attorney Paul Takakjian, contacted the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office a short time ago to say that he will be in Division 30 at 9 a.m. on Monday, April 24, to substitute in as counsel for Bo Stefan Eriksson (BA 301191), the Swedish businessman charged in the Ferrari case. The case was scheduled for a bail hearing on Monday, but earlier today was taken off calendar by another attorney who said he represented Mr. Eriksson. Mr. Takakjian informed the District Attorney's that Mr. Eriksson, currently in custody at the Los Angeles County Jail, will be brought to court by the Sheriff's Department. He is being held on \$5 million bail. Deputy District Attorney Tamara Hall of the Auto Insurance Fraud Division is the prosecutor. The District Attorney's office is unsure what will happen in court on Monday other than substitution of attorneys.
- A second case, also Monday morning in Division 30, was inadvertently left off the calendar for next week. Stephen Mark Heller (BA 298120), a temporary employee accused of stealing files from the law firm where he was working, is scheduled to be in Division 30 at 8:30 a.m. for the scheduling of a preliminary hearing. Deputy District Attorney Jonathan Fairtlough of the High Tech Crimes Unit is the prosecutor. Mr. Heller is represented by attorney Blair Berk. The defendant is free on his own recognizance.

Division 30 is located on the fifth floor of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center, 210 W. Temple St., Los Angeles.

Contact: Sandi Gibbons, 213-974-3528.

sg

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Four Men Charged in Alleged Murder Conspiracy Involving the Mexican Mafia

April 24, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

POMONA – A task force investigation into a Pomona area street gang following the murder of a Highway Patrol Officer two years ago resulted today in conspiracy to commit murder charges filed against four men accused in an alleged Mexican Mafia contract murder.

The targeted victim survived last summer's planned killing, in large part due to intervention by officers involved in the undercover investigation, authorities said.

Case No. KA074827 was filed today against Darryl Castrejon, 46 (dob 12-16-1959), of Rialto; Arthur Garcia, 35 (dob 12-3-1970); Julio Ponce Felix Jr., 33 (dob 3-29-1973), of Montclair; and Ricardo Polanco, 23 (dob 8-5-1982). Arraignment is scheduled for at least Castrejon and Garcia tomorrow in Pomona Superior Court. Both men were arrested on Friday. Felix and Polanco, already in custody on unrelated cases, may be arraigned later in the week.

The case was one of nearly a dozen filed in connection with what started out as an investigation of the 12th Street gang in Pomona following the murder of CHP Officer Thomas Steiner on April 21, 2004. Steiner, 35, was gunned down outside the Pomona courthouse by 16-year-old Valentino Mitchell Arenas, of Fontana and Pomona.

Arenas, a 12th Street gang wannabe, later pleaded guilty to first-degree murder and admitted the special circumstances of murder of a police officer, lying in wait and murder during a drive-by shooting. Arenas, now 18, was sentenced to spend the remainder of his life in prison without the possibility of parole.

After Steiner's murder, the Los Angeles Interagency Metropolitan Police

Apprehension Crime Task Force (LA IMPACT), moved in to investigate the 12th Street gang. The investigation focused on alleged drug-dealing by gang members. The alleged Mexican Mafia contract killing was uncovered as a result of surveillance during the lengthy investigation.

The alleged shooter, Polanco, was arrested in July of last year as he was on his way to kill the victim, according to the overt acts listed in the criminal complaint. He was arrested by Pomona police about five blocks away from the home of the alleged intended victim. The defendant was armed with a .38-caliber handgun at the time he was taken into custody.

Deputy District Attorney Ricardo Ocampo of the Major Crimes Division is prosecuting the case.

The other cases filed against alleged members of the 12th Street gang charge conspiracy and narcotics violations. Those are being prosecuted out of the Pomona Branch office by Deputy District Attorneys Manuel Garcia and Michael Cabral.

The investigation and resulting cases were announced this afternoon at a Pomona news conference by California Attorney General Bill Lockyer, Los Angeles District Attorney Steve Cooley, the CHP, the Pomona Police Department and members of LA IMPACT.

Cooley praised the work of law enforcement on the case, saying, "We commend law enforcement's conscientious focus on the criminal element in the east San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys that had placed that part of our county in great fear and danger."

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Attn: Editors, Assignment Editors Bo Stefan M. Eriksson Information is Incorrect

April 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

In the calendar of cases for Friday, the information on the preliminary hearing for Bo Stefan M. Eriksson is incorrect. The preliminary hearing started at 1:30 p.m. today in Los Angeles Superior Court Division 55. It continues at 9 a.m. tomorrow (April 28) in same division, which is on the seventh floor of the Criminal Justice Center, 210 W. Temple St.

Contact: Sandi Gibbons, 213-974-3528.

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Attn: Assignment & News Editors Annual Courageous Citizen Awards Ceremony

April 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

On Friday, April 28, Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley will present courageous citizen awards to several witnesses who assisted on three cases. The luncheon ceremony will be hosted by the Rotary Club of Los Angeles.

Details of the event are as follows:

Date: Friday, April 28, 2006
Time: 12:00 p.m. Luncheon
12:45 p.m. – 1:30 p.m. Awards Ceremony
Location: The City Club on Bunker Hill
Wells Fargo Tower, 54th Floor
333 S. Grand Ave.
Los Angeles

Honorees include three Hancock Park residents who helped police catch a serial rapist; a 20-year-old Los Angeles woman who saved a co-worker from being shot during an armed robbery; and a 24-year-old Cypress Park man who helped the victim of a gruesome traffic collision and identified the drunk driver.

CONTACT: Mark Delgado or Carol Baker, 213-974-7401.

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Former Attorney Arrested in Embezzlement Case

April 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A former attorney who was charged last year with embezzling more than \$750,000 from estates of nine victims was arrested today on a new embezzlement case involving conservatorships for six military veterans too disabled to handle their own affairs, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Decio Rangel Jr. of the Justice System Integrity Division said 47-year-old Charles Brian Smith (dob 10-29-1958) was arrested at his Wilshire area home today. He was jailed in lieu of \$390,000 bond. Smith could be arraigned as early as tomorrow in Los Angeles Superior Court Division 30.

Smith and Anne L. Chavis were charged in case No. BA 301029, filed on April 12 as a felony complaint for arrest warrant. Investigators continue to search for Chavis, 72 (dob 10-15-1933), who served as conservator for the six veterans. She also served as a special administrator for a probate estate and Smith was the attorney.

The defendants were charged with one count of conspiracy, seven counts of perjury, two counts of theft by a caretaker from a dependent adult, one count of grand theft, two counts of forgery and two counts of preparing false documentary evidence. The complaint alleged the theft was more than \$50,000. If convicted, each faces a possible maximum state prison term of 14 years and eight months.

Authorities said Smith and Chavis allegedly conspired to embezzle at least \$92,000 from trust accounts of the veterans and the probate estate between 2000 and 2005. The victims included veterans from the Army, Navy, Marine Corps and Air Force.

The lead investigative agency on the case was the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Office of Inspector General. The District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation also was involved.

In the previous case filed against Smith (BA282965) in June 2005, the former attorney was charged with embezzling more than \$750,000 from the estates of nine victims. He was free on \$100,000 bail in that case when arrested today. Smith is scheduled to appear in Los Angeles Superior Court Department 114 on May 30 for a pretrial hearing in the first case.

sg

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District Attorney Honors Courageous Citizens

April 28, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Several individuals who exhibited acts of heroism and bravery were honored today by District Attorney Steve Cooley during the Courageous Citizens Awards Ceremony sponsored by the Rotary Club of Los Angeles.

"They each faced danger, yet acted with courage – even risking their lives – to save others and to pursue justice," Cooley said during a ceremony at the City Club on Bunker Hill. "They've helped to take dangerous criminals off the streets and made our community that much safer. For that, we applaud our honorees – they are truly heroes in our midst."

The District Attorney's Office created the Courageous Citizen Award in 1985 to commend those individuals who have acted at considerable personal risk to help a victim of crime, assist in the capture of a suspect, or testify in the face of extraordinary pressures.

The awards were presented to recipients nominated by deputy district attorneys. Honorees were (Information on each recipient follows.)

• **Rabbi Chaim Kolodny, Rabbi Shmuel Manne, Abraham Matyas, all from Hancock Park**

In the summer of 2002, a serial rapist prowled through the Hancock Park neighborhood, forcing his way into homes and robbing and sexually assaulting his victims – all elderly women.

Rabbi Kolodny, 35, Rabbi Manne, 37, and Abraham Matyas, 49 – members of Hatzolah, a non-profit organization that provides volunteer emergency services – spotted a man in the neighborhood who matched a police drawing of the rapist. They followed the man, called police and ensured that he was arrested.

The defendant, Gary David Johnson, was convicted of multiple counts of rape, burglary, elder abuse and other crimes. He was sentenced to three life terms in state prison in April 2005.

• **Iran N. Garzon, Los Angeles**

In July 2004, two gun-wielding robbers stormed the market where Iran works and demanded the shop's money. When 20-year-old Iran realized a coworker did not understand the robbers' orders and was in danger of being shot, she intervened and opened the cash register.

The next day, Iran spotted one of the robbers walking in front of the market. She called the police and identified him.

During the preliminary hearing and before the defendant's trial, Iran was threatened by his friends and family. She was also followed after work by unknown men. Still, Iran testified and helped take a dangerous criminal off the streets. In March 2005, Terrence Green was sentenced to 13 years in state prison.

• **Mario Gutierrez, Cypress Park**

Mario and his friends were driving home on June 19, 2003, when they came across the aftermath of a gruesome traffic collision. A drunk driver had slammed into a disabled vehicle on the side of the road. That vehicle had then crushed a tow-truck driver against his truck.

After Mario, 24, helped the trapped drunk driver out of his vehicle, the suspect fled the scene. Mario and his friends then tended to the victim – whose legs were severed just below the hips – likely saving his life.

Mario identified the drunk driver from a photo six-pack and testified at the preliminary hearing. The defendant, Choon Suk Ro, ultimately pleaded guilty and was sentenced on April 14 to three years in state prison.

CONTACT: Mark Delgado or Carol Baker, 213-974-7401.

jr

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Alleged Gang Member Charged in Shooting Death of Teen Actress

March 1, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Murder and attempted murder charges were filed against an alleged gang member today in connection with an October 2005 shooting in Inglewood in which teen actress Tara Correa-McMullen was killed, the District Attorney's office announced.

Damien Watts, 20 (dob 3-29-1985), already in custody in connection with an unrelated shooting, is scheduled to be arraigned in the next few days. He was charged in case No. BA298845 with one count of murder and two counts of attempted murder. The complaint alleged Watts personally fired a handgun during commission of the crimes. The complaint also alleged the crimes were committed in association with a criminal street gang.

A bail of \$3 million was requested by the District Attorney's office. If convicted, Watts faces a maximum prison sentence of multiple life terms with the possibility of parole.

Deputy District Attorney Robert J. Sherwood of the Hardcore Gang Division said Watts is accused of the Oct. 21, 2005, shooting of McMullen, 16, whose true name was Shalvah McMullen. The shooting occurred outside an apartment complex in Inglewood when Watts, allegedly armed with an AK47 style assault rifle, and an as-yet-unidentified second gang member opened fire on a group of people. The gunfire occurred as McMullen and the others tried to run to safety inside the apartment complex.

McMullen died at the scene. Two other people were struck by gunfire, but survived.

McMullen had been playing the recurring role of "Graciela Reyes" on the CBS-TV series "Judging Amy." She had been on the show since she was 14 years old. The victim also was in the 2005 film "Rebound" with Martin Lawrence.

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Attn: Assignment Editors
Senate Bill 1642
"Three Strikes Reform Act of 2006"
Press Conference

March 1, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

District Attorney Steve Cooley will hold a news conference at 10 a.m. tomorrow (Thursday, March 2) with State Sen. Gloria Romero, D-Los Angeles, to announce introduction of Romero's Senate Bill 1642, the "Three Strikes Reform Act of 2006." Scheduled to join them at the news conference in the District Attorney's conference room are representatives from the Los Angeles Police Department and the Police Chiefs' Association, and Brian Dunne of the Cochran Law Firm, who with Cooley has authored a Three Strikes initiative. The news conference will be on the 18th floor of the Criminal Justice Center, 210 W. Temple St., Los Angeles. Contact for Sen. Romero, Victoria Ballesteros, 323-881-0100, or Sandi Gibbons or Jane Robison for the District Attorney, 213-974-3528.

sg

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Drug Charges Filed Against Man Who Shut Down Long Beach Airport Terminal

March 1, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Minnesota man whose dash across the tarmac at Long Beach Airport early Monday caused evacuation and shutdown of the terminal was charged today with possession for sale and transportation of cocaine, the District Attorney's office announced.

Corey Lamont Davis, 35 (dob 3-15-1970), of St. Paul is scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in Division 30 of Los Angeles Superior Court. He is charged in case No. BA 298824 with one count each of transportation of cocaine for sale and possession of cocaine for sale. It was alleged Davis had more than one kilo of cocaine.

Bail was recommended at \$1 million for the defendant, who was arrested by Long Beach police Monday morning after running out onto the airport's tarmac.

Authorities shut down the airport terminal for about an hour-and-a-half, leaving some 1,000 passengers waiting outside during an investigation. Davis bolted from the terminal's security screening area around 6 a.m., ran onto the tarmac and finally was arrested just northeast of the airport, authorities said.

If convicted, the defendant faces a maximum state prison term of at least 16 years. Sentencing enhancements filed included possession of more than a kilo of cocaine and a prior drug conviction in 1994.

The case was filed by the District Attorney's Major Narcotics Division. A prosecutor has not yet been assigned to the case.

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Former L.A. Councilman, Ex Union Leader Charged by State and Federal Prosecutors

March 3, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Federal and state charges have been filed against two former heads of prominent labor organizations in connection with a scheme to embezzle money from Service Employees International Union Local 99 to help finance the successful Los Angeles City Council campaign of one of the defendants, United States Attorney Debra Wong Yang and Los Angeles County District Attorney Steve Cooley announced today.

The charges, brought in separate cases filed in federal and state courts, result from federal, state and local investigations into the City Council campaign of Martin Ludlow, who was elected to the City Council in 2003 and resigned last year to head the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor. Ludlow resigned that post late last month, citing the investigations.

The federal charges involve the use of union funds to pay expenses for Ludlow's political campaign. The state charges stem from violations of campaign laws.

Ludlow and Janett Humphries, former Local 99 president, were charged in both jurisdictions. The state case against Ludlow and Humphries was filed today. Humphries, 63, was arraigned this afternoon in Division 30 of Los Angeles Superior Court. She pleaded not guilty and was freed on her own recognizance. She is due back in court on April 3 for scheduling of a preliminary hearing date.

The 41-year-old Ludlow is to appear on Monday in the same court. Deputy District Attorney Max Huntsman of the Public Integrity Division announced in court this afternoon that a plea is anticipated in Ludlow's case.

Both defendants were charged with one count of conspiracy to exceed the \$500 campaign contribution limit, a felony. Humphries was charged with a

second felony count of conspiracy to conceal campaign contributions.

Ludlow was charged with two additional misdemeanor counts of violating campaign laws.

The United States Attorney's office this morning filed charges and a related plea agreement in federal Court in which Ludlow agreed to plead guilty to a felony charge of conspiring to violate federal labor laws that outlaw embezzling from a labor organization.

Humphries was indicted by a federal grand jury today for her alleged role in the scheme to embezzle union funds and her alleged efforts to cover up the illegal activity. The 18-count indictment charges Humphries with one count of conspiracy and 17 substantive counts of embezzling union funds to pay Ludlow's campaign workers and his cell phone bills, as well as to finance lavish travel for Humphries, her friends and family.

Humphries was ousted from her leadership post in Local 99 when SIEU International took over the union in 2004.

In 2002, Ludlow was part of a hotly contested race to fill the 10th District seat on the Los Angeles City Council. According to court documents, Ludlow went to his friend Humphries, who at the time was president of SEIU Local 99, for help in the campaign. The two allegedly developed a plan to funnel money into Ludlow's campaign by placing campaign workers on the union's payroll. The campaign workers allegedly were paid more than \$30,000 in salary and benefits.

Local elections laws place a \$500 limit on campaign contributions, making the alleged surreptitious payments illegal. The paying of the Ludlow campaign workers allegedly also amounted to an embezzlement of the union's money, as neither the union's Board of Trustees nor Executive Board approved the expenditures.

When the unlawful payments came to light shortly after the primary election, Ludlow and Humphries allegedly tried to cover them up. The two defendants allegedly fabricated documents, altered union records and had two of the campaign employees create bogus work product to make it appear that they had actually performed work for the Union.

Ludlow has agreed to plead guilty to one count of conspiracy to violate the Labor Management Reporting and Disclosure Act, which makes it a crime for an officer of a labor organization – in this case, Humphries – to embezzle union funds. Ludlow is expected to be arraigned on the charges on March 27.

The plea agreement does not contemplate jail time for Ludlow, but a federal judge will make the final determination if jail is appropriate. The plea agreement does include a provision that bars Ludlow from working with any labor organization for 13 years. It also requires him to pay \$36,492 in restitution to the union.

Gordon S. Heddell, Inspector General, United States Department of Labor, stated: "Using union funds to illegally aid a political campaign represents a betrayal of union members' trust and weakens the public trust. This

indictment and plea agreement highlights my office's determination to investigate corrupt entities who misappropriate union coffers for personal gain. We will continue to work with other law enforcement agencies and DOL agencies to safeguard union employee benefits."

John Heaney, regional director of the U.S. Department of Labor's Office of Labor-Management Standards, said: "This investigation reflects OLMS' commitment to safeguard union assets by ensuring that members' hard-earned dues are spent for properly authorized, union-related purposes. These officials will be held accountable for their actions."

Humphries is scheduled to be arraigned on the federal indictment on March 20. If she is convicted, Humphries faces a maximum possible sentence of five years in federal prison for each of the 18 counts. An indictment or a complaint contains allegations that a defendant has committed a crime. Every defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court.

The cases against Ludlow and Humphries were investigated by the Department of Labor and the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation after the City Ethics Commission referred a case to the District Attorney's Public Integrity Division. The City Ethics Commission's findings on its investigation into Ludlow are expected to be announced at a later date.

oOo

Editors: Contacts for U.S. Attorney are Thom Mrozek, Public Affairs Officers, 213-894-6947, or Assistant U.S. Attorney Craig H. Missakian, Public Corruption and Civil Rights Section, 213-894-0757.

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14-Year-Old Charged in Alleged Sexual Assault

March 7, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

COMPTON – A 14-year-old boy was charged today with sexual assault and other crimes in connection with an attack on an 11-year-old boy in Watts over the weekend, the District Attorney's office announced.

The minor, whose name was not released due to his age, is expected to be arraigned tomorrow in Compton Juvenile Court (Department 260). The minor (dob 2-16-1992) is charged in case number TJ14983 with one count each of forcible sodomy, forcible penetration with a foreign object, forcible lewd act on a child, assault with intent to commit sex crimes, making criminal threats, indecent exposure, carrying a switchblade knife and resisting arrest. It was alleged in the three sexual assault charges that the defendant was personally armed.

The petition filed late today also asked the court to determine that the minor is unfit to be tried as a juvenile. If the court makes that finding at a later hearing, the case will be transferred to adult court.

The alleged attack occurred on March 4 and the minor was arrested on March 5.

The case was filed by Deputy District Attorney Shawn Randolph, in charge of the Compton juvenile office.

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Attorney Charged with Embezzling from 89-Year-Old Victim

March 9, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A 68-year-old Palos Verdes attorney was arrested today on charges that he embezzled \$150,000 from the trust of a woman who once served as a secretary to Walt Disney, the District Attorney's office announced.

Salvatore Patrick Osio, (dob 2-22-38), was arrested this morning at his Palos Verdes home by investigators from the D.A.'s Bureau of Investigation, said Deputy District Attorney Decio Rangel with the Justice System Integrity Division.

Osio is charged in case No. BA298039 with one count each of theft from an elder, grand theft, forgery and perjury.

Shortly after he was hired by Alicia Waters and her husband, Henry, in July 2002, Osio allegedly embezzled \$150,000 from the couple's trust fund. Alicia Waters, 89, discovered the theft after her husband's death and reported it to the California State Bar, which referred the case to the L.A. County District Attorney's office. Mrs. Waters died in November at the age of 92.

Osio is scheduled to be arraigned sometime after 8:30 a.m. Friday in the Foltz Criminal Justice Center, Division 30. He is being held on \$150,000 bail. If convicted, he faces up to six years, eight months in state prison.

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Law Office Manager Sent to Prison in Large-Scale Auto Insurance Fraud

March 10, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A man who with his brother managed a law office involved in a large-scale auto insurance fraud ring was sent to state prison today and ordered to make restitution of \$1.5 million, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Loren Naiman of the Automobile Insurance Fraud Division said Munir Sharif, 42, of Valley Village, was sentenced to four years and eight months in state prison by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Kathleen Kennedy-Powell. Sharif pleaded no contest to conspiracy, insurance fraud and state tax evasion charges.

Sharif was among 18 people, including two lawyers, who were charged in the massive case that covered a multimillion-dollar fraud stretching from 1993 to 2000. The case centered on the law office of Curtis Mitchell Shaw of Beverly Hills and Keith Darran Washington of Reseda. Both men pleaded guilty last year and have been sentenced. Shaw went to state prison; Washington to county jail and probation. Both also were ordered to make restitution.

The only defendant left in the case is Sharif's brother, Ahmed Sharif Kahn, 42, also of Valley Village. He is due in court on April 7.

All other defendants – with the exception of one whose case was dismissed – have pleaded and been sentenced.

Deputy District Attorney Barry Gale said that between mid-1993 and the end of 2000, Shaw and Washington operated a law practice managed by Sharif and his brother. The office served as a clearing house for staged vehicle collisions that resulted in false billings to insurance companies.

The ring, which netted nearly \$2.5 million, was investigated by the Urban

Auto Fraud Task Force made up of the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation, the California Department of Insurance, the California Franchise Tax Board and the California Highway Patrol.

District Attorney Steve Cooley noted in early 2003 when the case was filed that the task force "put the breaks on an elaborate and well-organized fraud ring."

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Northridge Woman Charged with Murder

March 13, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – A 43-year-old Northridge woman was charged today with murder in connection with the fatal shooting of her boyfriend, whose body was discovered last Tuesday, the District Attorney's office announced.

Kimberly Carter, (dob11-10-62), is scheduled to be arraigned some time after 1:30 p.m. today in San Fernando Superior Court, Dept. S, said Deputy District Attorney Carolyn McNary. Carter is charged in case No. PA054745. In addition to one count of murder, she is charged with a special allegation of personal use of a handgun. She is being held on \$5 million bail.

Carter is suspected of fatally shooting Harry Phillips Jr. on March 6. His body was discovered the next day at a home they had shared in the 11200 block of Garden Grove Avenue in Northridge. She was arrested by Palm Springs police on Thursday after she allegedly called a TV station.

The case will be assigned to Deputy District Attorney Angela Jordan to prosecute.

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Trio Sent to Prison for Life in Poly High Murder

March 14, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Three young San Fernando Valley men were sentenced today to spend the remainder of their lives in prison for the 2001 drive-by murder of a 15-year-old boy near Francis Polytechnic High School in Sun Valley.

Deputy District Attorney Kathleen Blanchard of the Hardcore Gang Division said the trio was sentenced by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michael Pastor, who presided over their retrial on murder with special circumstances charges. A jury convicted the defendants on Feb. 8 of first-degree murder and conspiracy charges. The jury also found true the special circumstances of lying in wait and murder during a drive-by shooting.

The District Attorney's office determined prior to trial that it would not seek the death penalty against Angel Rodriguez, 23, of Sun Valley; Mauricio Martin Montes, 22, of Panorama City; and Christian Omar Hernandez, also 23, of Van Nuys. As a result of the convictions, Pastor imposed the only possible sentences – life in prison without the possibility of parole.

The defendants were charged with the Dec. 13, 2001, murder of Santiago Polanco of Sun Valley, a Poly High freshman. The victim, who police said was not a gang member, was shot and killed while walking with a group of students.

Rodriguez, Montes and Hernandez were charged on Dec. 26, five days after their arrests by Los Angeles police. Also charged was Juan Manuel Chavez, 25, the alleged shooter. He remains a fugitive.

Blanchard said the shooting was to avenge the stabbing of a friend. She said the defendants were driving around looking for victims.

Two mistrials were declared in the case when two separate juries – one in

Van Nuys and another at the downtown courthouse -- could not agree on verdicts at the previous trials.

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Couple Pleads to Robbing 5-Year-Old Girl

March 15, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles man and woman charged with stealing a gold chain from around the neck of a 5-year-old girl last month pleaded no contest today and were sentenced to two years each in state prison, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney June Chung said Julio Cesar Beltran, 18, and Patricia Serrano, 31, entered the pleas to one count each of second-degree robbery before Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Joseph Brandolino. The pair pleaded on the same day the preliminary hearing was set to begin.

On Jan. 26, Beltran jumped out of a car driven by Serrano and grabbed at two chains around the neck of the little girl. He ripped one off, causing an 8-inch laceration on the back of her neck. The incident in front of the Estrella Meat Market at 2668 Zoe Ave. was caught on videotape. Sheriff's deputies recognized the suspect and notified Huntington Park detectives.

At the time of the incident, Serrano was out on bail in another pending case, TA082089. She is charged with one count of possession of marijuana for sale. That case is still pending.

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Former Superintendent, School Board Member Accused of Misappropriating Funds

March 15, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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TORRANCE – The former superintendent of the Manhattan Beach Unified School District and a board member were charged today with misappropriating public funds for personal expenses, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Juliet Schmidt of the Public Integrity Division said Gerald Frederick Davis, the former superintendent who is now retired and lives in Florida, and school board member Mary Agnes Rogers are expected to surrender for arraignment on March 20 in Division 4 of South Bay Superior Court in Torrance. They are charged separately.

Davis, 58 (dob 9-17-1947), was charged in case No. YA064319 with one felony count of appropriation of public money without authority of law, a violation of Penal Code Section 424(a)(1). Davis, who was superintendent from 1991 to 2003, is accused of taking money for travel by his wife and personal expenses.

Rogers, 63 (dob 2-1-1943), of Manhattan Beach, is charged with the same felony count in case No. YA064320. She also is accused of using public money to buy gifts for people who worked on a bond and parcel tax measures designed to increase school funding.

If convicted, each of the defendants could face a maximum of four years in state prison. Bail was recommended at \$25,000 each.

The case was investigated by the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation after the South Bay Easy Reader newspaper published articles about the expenditures in 2004.

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Chase Suspect Charged

March 17, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – A man suspected of leading officers on a wild chase on the San Diego (405) Freeway and West Los Angeles surface streets on Wednesday was charged with evading and additional counts, the District Attorney's office announced.

Israel Hernandez Arreola, 20 (dob 5-15-85), is scheduled to be arraigned after 1:30 p.m. in San Fernando Superior Court, Dept. S, said Deputy District Attorney Fernando Guzman. He is being held on \$440,000 bail.

Arreola is charged in case No. PA054809 with one count of evading an officer causing injury, one count of evading, two counts of assault with a firearm on a peace officer, one count of hit-and-run causing injury, one count of exhibiting deadly weapon to a police officer and one count of carrying an unregistered loaded firearm – all felonies. He also was charged with two misdemeanor counts of hit-and-run. The complaint also alleges special allegations of personal use of a firearm.

The pursuit began shortly after 2 p.m. Wednesday in San Fernando and ended about 30 minutes later near National Boulevard and the 405 Freeway. Arreola allegedly was driving a 1995 Honda sedan when he fled for unknown reasons. During the chase, the driver hit several vehicles, causing injury to one person.

Guzman said earlier reports that Arreola was wanted for attempted murder were incorrect.

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Two Charged with Murder in Culver City Car Crash

March 17, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – The passenger in a car that crashed this week in Culver City, killing a teacher who was with a group of students on the sidewalk was charged with murder today. The driver of the car was charged with leaving the scene of the fatal crash.

Reynaldo Cruz, 19 (dob 8-9-1986), and Laura Veronica Samayoa, 20 (dob 1-29-1986), were charged in case number SA 059639. They were scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in Division 144 of the Airport Branch of Los Angeles Superior Court. Bail for Cruz was recommended at \$1 million. Bail for Samayoa was recommended at \$50,000.

Authorities said the crash occurred on Wednesday, March 15, along National Boulevard in Culver City after the car careened out of control, traveled onto the sidewalk and collided with a poll.

Carrie Elaine Phillips, 24, the teacher, was killed. Eight of her students, ages 13 and 14, were injured, but will survive, authorities said.

Evidence indicated that the car went out of control after the passenger grabbed at the driver or the car's steering wheel, authorities said.

If convicted, Cruz, of Los Angeles, faces a maximum sentence of 15 years to life in prison. He is charged under a second-degree murder theory. Samayoa, also of Los Angeles, faces a possible maximum sentence of four years in prison if convicted of the charge of leaving the scene of a collision in which a death resulted and failing to provide assistance or identifying information.

The complaint was filed by Deputy District Attorney Theodore H. Lamb of the Airport Branch office. A prosecutor has not yet been assigned to the case.

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Pipeline Company Charged in Pyramid Lake Oil Spill

March 17, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

VALENCIA – The company that operates a pipeline at Pyramid Lake was charged today with water pollution resulting from an oil spill a year ago, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Daniel Wright of the Environmental Law Section of the Consumer Protection Division filed a four-count complaint (6NW01020) in Santa Clarita Court in Valencia against Pacific Pipeline System LLC. The company is scheduled to be arraigned on the misdemeanor complaint on March 30 in Division 2.

Wright said the oil spill occurred on March 23, 2005, after a break in the pipeline that was not discovered until noticed by workers with the California Department of Transportation. Approximately 142,000 gallons of oil spilled into the lake, he said

The case was investigated by the California Fish and Game Department. Wright said they turned the case and evidence over to the District Attorney's office last week.

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Strier Sentenced to Two Life Terms for Attempted Murder

March 17, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Thousand Oaks man convicted of the attempted first-degree murder of a civil attorney outside the Van Nuys Superior Courthouse two years ago was sentenced today to two life terms, the District Attorney's Office announced.

William Strier, 66, was sentenced to life plus an additional 25 years to life in prison by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Rand Rubin. He was also ordered to pay \$10,000 in fines and \$3,000 in restitution to the victim, Gerald E. Curry.

During sentencing, Judge Rubin said he was shocked to read in a probation report that Strier had shot a neighbor four times in 1969 and "did exactly what he did in this case, zoned out" when he was arrested.

"I think the jury saw through the fact that he claimed that he took all these pills. It worked for him the last time. It didn't work this time," Judge Rubin said.

A jury in January found Strier guilty of shooting Curry five times as Curry ran for cover and ducked behind a tree. The shooting occurred on Oct. 31, 2003, and was captured on national television by news reporters and cameramen who were in Van Nuys awaiting developments in the Robert Blake case.

Deputy District Attorney Jim Falco said Strier attempted "to execute Mr. Curry" and has never expressed remorse or accepted responsibility. "He continues to make excuses," Falco said.

Strier was allegedly upset over a probate case in which Curry, of Simi Valley, was acting as the attorney. The incident began about 10:20 a.m. when Strier approached Curry, pulled out two guns and began shooting. After Strier emptied his guns, he placed them back in his pockets and casually walked

away while stating, "That's what you get for taking my money." He was tackled by a Traffic Court judge who is also a reserve Sheriff's Deputy and taken into custody.

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Former School Superintendent Pleads to Misappropriating Funds

March 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

TORRANCE – The former superintendent of the Manhattan Beach Unified School District pleaded guilty today to misappropriating public funds for personal expenses.

Gerald Frederick Davis, 58, who retired from the district in 2003 and now lives in Florida, was fined the maximum of \$10,000 by Torrance Superior Court Judge Thomas R. Sokolov. The judge placed Davis on probation for three years.

Deputy District Attorney Juliet Schmidt of the Public Integrity Division said the judge also ordered Davis to repay more than \$6,000. She said the defendant already has given the district \$2,200. He still owes between \$4,200 and \$4,500, she said.

Davis pleaded guilty as charged to one felony count of appropriation of public money without authority of law (Section 424(a)(1) of the California Penal Code). Schmidt said that because of the conviction, Davis cannot hold further public employment.

In cases filed last week, Schmidt also charged former Manhattan Beach school board member Mary Agnes Rogers, 63, with one count of misappropriating public funds. Her case was not related to the Davis case.

Rogers was arraigned today before Sokolov and pleaded not guilty. She is scheduled to return to court on May 2 for preliminary hearing setting. Schmidt said Rogers, who lives in Manhattan Beach, was allowed to remain free on her own recognizance.

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Man Convicted of First-Degree Murder in Death of Two Inglewood Brothers in 2001

March 21, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Marina del Rey man serving a six-year prison term for stealing insurance money from two brothers was found guilty today with their murder four years ago, the District Attorney's office announced.

The Los Angeles Superior Court jury deliberated about 1 ½ days before finding Timothy Mack guilty of the June 6, 2001 murders of 20-year-old Howard Byrdson and his 18-year-old brother, Jontrae. Deputy District Attorney Ron Goudy with the Organized Crime Division prosecuted the case.

The six-man, six-woman jury also found Mack guilty of the April 17, 2000 murder of Norman Fields. Goudy said Fields' murder was unconnected to the two brothers.

In addition to finding Mack guilty of three, first-degree murders, the jury found the special circumstances of murder for financial gain, multiple murders, murder of a potential witness and lying in wait all to be true. Mack, 50, is facing three life without the possibility of parole terms in prison when he is sentenced on April 20 by Judge Michael Johnson. Prosecutors did not seek the death penalty.

Mack and co-defendant Angela Wallace, a former Beverly Hills attorney, were convicted in December 2002 of embezzling \$380,000 from a life insurance settlement awarded to the two brothers. The settlement was for the death of their mother, Shiree Arrant, an LAPD officer who died of natural causes in June 2000.

But the Byrdson brothers never received any money. A month after they contacted prosecutors about the missing insurance money, a man dressed as a postal worker knocked on their door and fatally shot the two brothers.

Mack is charged in a separate case of auto insurance fraud. That case is pending.

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California Prosecutors Announce Ameriquest Settlement Giving State's Borrowers Up to \$50 Million in Restitution

March 21, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(213) 974-3525

Six California District Attorneys' offices, along with the California Attorney General's Office and the state Department of Corporations, announced the filing of a judgment in Alameda County Superior Court today against Ameriquest Mortgage Co. The settlement resolves a multi-year investigation into suspected "predatory lending" practices by the largest sub-prime lender in the United States.

Under terms of the settlement, California borrowers will receive up to \$50 million in restitution.

The District Attorneys' offices in Alameda, Los Angeles, Merced, Monterey, San Francisco and San Mateo counties began their investigation into Ameriquest more than three years ago, soon joining forces with the Attorney General's Office and the Department of Corporations. The California task force eventually coordinated its efforts with a group of attorneys general and financial regulators in more than 30 other states that had initiated a separate investigation of Ameriquest after California's inquiry began. Today's filing represents California's statewide agreement, which has been coordinated with the filings in 48 other states after Ameriquest and the states entered into a multistate agreement in January.

Ameriquest makes refinancing loans to homeowners who are hoping to consolidate credit card and other debt into new home mortgages, often looking for lower monthly payments. Borrowers who don't have high credit ratings often turn to sub-prime loans, which typically have higher interest rates and costs. Astronomical growth over the last few years has made Ameriquest the nation's largest sub-prime mortgage lender.

In the documents filed today the prosecutors allege that Ameriquest

employees deceived consumers using high-pressure sales tactics to sell mortgage refinancing. Hundreds of complaints received from California consumers indicated a number of improper practices, such as: inadequate disclosure of prepayment penalties, discount points and other loan terms; unsolicited refinancing offers that did not adequately disclose prepayment penalties; improperly influencing and accepting inflated appraisals; and encouraging borrowers to give inaccurate income or employment information to obtain loans.

In today's agreement, Ameriquest denies the allegations raised by the prosecutors, but the company has agreed to be bound by comprehensive new standards designed to prevent unfair and deceptive practices. The reforms include: providing full disclosure regarding interest rates, discount points, prepayment penalties, and other loan or refinancing terms; and not paying incentives to sales personnel to include prepayment penalties or any other fees or charges in the mortgages. An independent outside monitor will assist in overseeing company practices to ensure compliance with the court order.

Much of the agreement spells out "injunctive relief" -- wide-ranging reforms of the company's lending practices to resolve the concerns of the prosecutors.

Under the agreement, Ameriquest is required to:

- Provide the same interest rates and discount points for similarly-situated consumers.
- Not pay incentives to sales personnel to include prepayment penalties or any other fees or charges in the mortgages.
- Provide full disclosure regarding interest rates, discount points, prepayment penalties, and other loan or refinancing terms.
- Overhaul its appraisal practices by removing branch offices and sales personnel from the appraiser selection process, instituting an automated system to select appraisers from panels created in each state, limiting the company's ability to get second opinions on appraisals, and prohibiting Ameriquest employees from influencing appraisals.
- Not encourage prospective borrowers to misstate income sources or income levels.
- Provide accurate, good faith estimates.
- Limit prepayment penalty periods on variable rate mortgages.
- Not engage in refinancing solicitations during the first 24 months of a loan, unless the borrower is considering refinancing. Use independent loan closers.
- Adopt policies to protect whistleblowers and facilitate reporting of improper conduct.

Ameriquest already has implemented several of the requirements. For example, the company began providing the same interest rates and discount points for similarly-situated consumers (diminishing the discretion of salespeople to manipulate pricing) during the California investigation.

The agreement also provides for appointment of an independent monitor to oversee Ameriquest's compliance with the settlement terms. The monitor will have broad authority to examine Ameriquest's lending operations, including

access to documents and personnel. The monitor will submit periodic compliance reports to the states' attorneys general during the next five years. Ameriquest will pay the monitor's costs.

Based on a common complaint of consumers that they did not fully understand the terms of their loan, Ameriquest will now be specifically required to provide an accurate one-page disclosure document to a potential borrower at least three days before closing any loan. The form (attached) is designed to highlight in plain English the main features of the loan, including:

- Interest rate.
- Discount points charged.
- Type of loan (fixed v. adjustable).
- Monthly payments.
- Whether there are prepayment penalties, how much these amount to and when they must be paid.

Ameriquest salespeople will be required to orally explain these loan terms in a scripted format when the loan terms have been determined.

In addition to providing the one-page disclosure to a customer days before the loan closing, Ameriquest will place a copy on top of the pile of often confusing documents that a borrower must review at the actual closing (signing) of the loan. When borrowers are Spanish-speaking they will be provided this essential disclosure document in Spanish.

Of the nationwide total of \$295 million in restitution, California consumers will ultimately receive as much as \$50 million.

A total of \$175 million will be distributed in a nationwide claims process to all eligible Ameriquest customers who obtained mortgages from January 1, 1999, through April 1, 2003, with payments based on a formula set by the settling states. In addition, more than \$20 million of separate restitution will be used to compensate California Ameriquest customers who obtained mortgages between January 1, 1999, and December 31, 2005. A method to determine which customers are eligible to receive payments from this additional restitution fund will soon be made final.

Consumers do not need to take any action at this point to pursue recoveries - they will be contacted later by California authorities or the nationwide settlement administrator as specific recovery terms and plans are implemented.

Of the nationwide total of \$30 million allocated as agency costs and related payments, the California prosecutors will share \$4 million, consisting of \$3 million in costs of investigation and prosecution, and \$1 million in civil penalties.

This comprehensive nationwide result demonstrates the value of cooperation among law enforcement and regulatory agencies. "We believe that the agreement -- which removes incentives for salespeople to misrepresent loan terms and requires disclosures to make the process more transparent and understandable to consumers -- is a landmark and a model for other lenders to emulate," said Thomas Papageorge, head of the Los Angeles County

District Attorney's Consumer Protection Division. Papageorge and Deputy District Attorney Stuart Lytton of the Consumer Protection Division handled the case.

oOo

Editors: Papageorge may be reached at 213-580-3305. Lytton may be reached at 213-580-3319.

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Man Pleads in Death of Tennis Stars' Half-Sister

March 22, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(213) 974-3525

COMPTON – A man who was to start his third trial today on charges that he killed the half-sister of tennis champions Serena and Venus Williams pleaded no contest to a voluntary manslaughter charge.

Deputy District Attorney Hoon Chun of the Major Crimes Division said Robert Maxfield, 25, also admitted personal use of a firearm in the Sept. 14, 2003, killing of Yetunde Price. Chun said Maxfield is expected to receive a 15-year state prison term when he is sentenced on April 6 by Compton Superior Court Judge Steven C. Suzukawa.

Price was with a male companion in her SUV in Compton when she was slain. The companion, Rolland Wormley, drove to a relative's home and called 911 after the shooting.

Maxfield and a second defendant, Aaron Michael Hammer, 26, were charged with the murder. Hammer was arrested shortly after the shooting and Maxfield in January 2004.

The first trial in late 2004 ended with jury deadlocks for both defendants. The case against Hammer was dismissed by the court. A retrial was scheduled for Maxfield. The second jury deadlocked on a verdict last year. Today was to be the start of the third trial.

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Three Charged in Kidnapping, Sexual Assault Case

March 22, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

BEVERLY HILLS – Two men were charged today with the Feb. 21 kidnapping and sexual assault of a woman in West Hollywood, while a third defendant was charged with stealing from the victim's ATM, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Marguerite Rizzo said police and sheriff's deputies are investigating whether the three are tied to additional robberies and sexual assaults in Los Angeles and other counties.

Charged in case No. SA059682 are Denson Henderson, 26 (dob 2-24-80), Jovanny P. Theus, 24 (dob 5-21-81), and Nakeya Denise Whittman, 20 (10-5-85). Henderson and Theus are being held on \$1 million each. Whittman is being held on \$40,000. All three are scheduled to be arraigned sometime after 1:30 p.m. today in Beverly Hills Superior Court, Div. 2.

Henderson and Theus allegedly abducted a woman in West Hollywood on Feb. 21 and drove her to several ATMs in a failed attempt to withdraw money. They then allegedly took the victim to a South Los Angeles residence where they repeatedly sexually assaulted her before releasing her nearly eight hours later. At one point prior to releasing the victim, Henderson allegedly drove his girlfriend, Whittman, to an ATM where she withdrew \$80 from the victim's account.

After Henderson and Theus were arrested in an unrelated incident of assault with a deadly weapon in early March, detectives noted that the two men resembled the victim's description of her kidnappers, Rizzo said. They are charged with one count each of kidnapping for carjacking, kidnapping to commit another crime, second-degree robbery, first-degree ATM robbery and multiple counts of sexual assault. If convicted, they each face life in prison.

Whittman is charged with receiving stolen property, theft and identity theft. If

convicted, she faces up to four years, eight months in prison.

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Boxer Pleads Guilty in Bludgeoning Death of Sportswriter

March 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Professional boxer James Butler Jr. pleaded guilty today to voluntary manslaughter and arson in the October 2004 fatal beating of a freelance sportswriter at the victim's Hollywood apartment, the District Attorney's office announced.

Butler, 33, known professionally as "The Harlem Hammer," entered the guilty plea before Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michael Pastor just prior to jury selection, said Deputy District Attorney Bjorn Dodd.

Butler admitted using a hammer to bludgeon 29-year-old Sam Kellerman to death and then setting fire inside the victim's apartment. Butler, who was staying with the victim, also admitted a prior strike for a conviction in New York. He will be sentenced to 29 years, four months in state prison on April 5. The complaint was amended to add the voluntary manslaughter charge. The original count of murder will be dismissed.

Kellerman, the brother of Fox sportscaster Max Kellerman, was slain at this apartment on North Vista Street in Hollywood on Oct. 12, 2004. The arson count alleged the fire was set between the time Kellerman was killed and when his body was found in his apartment on Oct. 17, according to the complaint.

The victim's 1993 Cadillac Seville was discovered parked near UCLA and further investigation led to Butler's arrest by LAPD homicide detectives.

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Woman Charged with Murder in Death of Husband

March 28, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – A 42-year-old Canyon Country woman was charged with murder and conspiracy today in connection with the death of her husband, whose body was found in his pickup truck last Wednesday, the District Attorney's office announced.

Esperanza Castro, (dob 5-31-63), is scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in San Fernando Superior Court, Dept. S, said Deputy District Attorney Carolyn McNary. Castro is charged in case No. PA054906 with one count of murder with the special allegations of personal and intentional discharge of a firearm and use of a deadly weapon, a pipe. She is being held without bail.

Castro is suspected of killing her husband, Ramon Castro, 43, in their Canyon Country home. His body was found in his Chevrolet pickup truck parked near the junction of the Antelope Valley (14) and Golden State (5) freeways on March 23. Ramon Castro was allegedly leaving his wife for another woman.

If convicted, she faces 51 years to life in prison.

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Attn: News & Assignment Editors Criminal Justice Wall of Fame Dedication

March 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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(213) 974-3525

Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley will join California Supreme Chief Justice Ronald M. George, Supervisor Yvonne Burke, Judge Warren L. Ettinger and Judge Arthur Alarcon at 12 p.m. on Monday, April 3, to help dedicate the Criminal Justice Wall of Fame.

The ceremony will be held outside the Foltz Criminal Justice Center at 210 W. Temple St., on the Temple Street side. The Criminal Justice Wall of Fame will honor 82 criminal defense lawyers, prosecutors and judges who made a significant contribution to the criminal justice system during their lifetime.

Contact: Judge Alarcon's office, 213-894-2693.

jr

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North Hollywood Man Pleads Guilty to Importing Counterfeit Designer Goods

February 1, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A 37-year-old North Hollywood man pleaded guilty today to counterfeiting and state tax evasion in a scheme to import thousands of knockoff designer handbags, the District Attorney's office announced.

Gad Azoulay is facing up to two years in state prison when he is sentenced April 24, said Deputy District Attorney David Berton with the Major Fraud Division. Azoulay entered his plea before Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Sam Ohta.

Azoulay was arrested in October 2004 following an extensive joint investigation by the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, the D.A.'s Bureau of Investigation and the state Franchise Tax Board. The investigation began in June of 2002 after the U.S. Customs and Border Protection seized containers at the port of Long Beach containing 12,000 handbags, including counterfeit Gucci and Louis Vuitton items.

Berton said Azoulay also will be ordered to pay between \$50,000-\$71,000 in restitution to the manufacturers and up to \$27,000 to the Franchise Tax Board when he is sentenced in April.

"I hope this sends a message to those that import or sell counterfeit handbags that the crimes are not victimless, and that local and federal law enforcement take them very seriously," Berton said.

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O'Donnell Pleads No Contest in Illegal Campaign Contribution Case

February 2, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A prominent Southern California attorney pleaded no contest today to making illegal campaign contributions to former Mayor James Hahn's campaign in 2000 and 2001, the District Attorney's office announced.

Pierce O'Donnell, who was not present in court, entered the plea through his attorney George O'Connell. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Alex Ricciardulli ordered him to pay \$155,200 in fines and penalties, placed him on three years probation and barred him from participating in any political fund-raising for three years.

"This was an important case in the overall effort by the D.A.'s office to ensure integrity in Los Angeles City government elections," Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley. "Part of our job is to assure an even playing field in electoral campaigns."

Deputy District Attorney's Ric Ocampo and Juliet Schmidt with the District Attorney's Public Integrity Division prosecuted the case. Ocampo said O'Donnell is still facing fines and sanctions by the city Ethics Commission, the state Fair Political Practices Commission and the California Bar Association. An investigation is also pending by the Federal Election Commission in a separate case.

The District Attorney's office began an investigation in early 2004 following a referral from the Los Angeles City Ethics Commission. O'Donnell was charged in June 2004 with hiding the identity of donors who contributed to the Hahn mayoral campaign between May 22 and 25, 2000, and Feb. 21 and 22, 2001. Seven co-defendants allegedly made the contributions and were reimbursed by O'Donnell.

O'Donnell, 58, of Montecito, pleaded no contest to five counts of using a false

name, a violation of Government Code 84301. In exchange for his plea, 21 additional counts were dismissed. The case against his co-defendant and personal trainer, David Bernstein, was dismissed.

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Third Teen Charged in Alleged High School Attack Plan

February 2, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

SYLMAR – A third teenager was charged today in connection with an alleged plan to stage a Valentine's Day attack at Quartz Hill High School, the District Attorney's office announced.

The minor, who authorities said is a friend of two boys already charged, is expected to be arraigned in Sylmar Juvenile Court, Department 279, tomorrow morning. He was not identified due to his age – 16. He was taken into juvenile custody earlier this week.

The alleged threats occurred during a telephone call on Jan. 28 while the minor was visiting relatives in another part of the state, authorities said. The Antelope Valley Sheriff's Station was notified and investigated. The minor lives with his parents in Lancaster, authorities said.

The minor (dob 9-25-1989) was charged in juvenile case No. MJ13954 with five counts of making criminal threats on Jan. 28.

The other two minors – 17 and 16 – were charged in December. They remain in juvenile custody. Their next court hearing is scheduled for Feb. 9.

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Man Charged with Shooting Police Officer

February 6, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A 20-year-old Santa Monica man was charged today with two counts of attempted murder and other charges after he allegedly shot at two Santa Monica undercover police officers, hitting one, the District Attorney's office announced.

Arrestment for German Michael Espinola, (dob 9-19-83), is scheduled for this afternoon in LAX Superior Court, Dept. 144, said Deputy District Attorney Scott Goodwin, assistant head deputy of Target Crimes.

Espinola is charged in case No. SA057554 with two counts of attempted, premeditated murder, two counts of assault with a firearm, one count of shooting at an occupied motor vehicle and one count of unlawful firearm activity. In addition, the complaint alleges the attempted murder was to further a criminal street gang and that Espinola personally discharged a handgun. He is being held on \$2.4 million bail.

Espinola allegedly fired at the two undercover officers who were following a van in which he was a passenger. The shooting occurred on Feb. 2.

If convicted, he's facing up to life in prison.

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Honda of Santa Monica Settles Consumer Case for \$1.37 Million

February 6, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A deceptive practices civil lawsuit against Honda of Santa Monica has been settled with the car dealership agreeing to a permanent injunction against the alleged practices and paying \$1.37 million in civil penalties, costs and restitution, the District Attorney's office announced today.

Head Deputy District Attorney Thomas Papageorge of the Consumer Protection Division said the monetary relief includes up to \$829,000 in direct restitution to Los Angeles County consumers. The District Attorney's office also will recover \$548,000 in penalties and costs under terms of the stipulated judgment.

Honda of Santa Monica is owned by Kramer Motors Incorporated, headquartered in Charlotte, N.C. Under terms of the settlement, agreed to without admission of wrongdoing, Honda of Santa Monica will set up a restitution program for "potential restitution eligible customers."

The civil action filed by the District Attorney's Consumer Protection Division alleged that Honda of Santa Monica made false or misleading statements in contracts regarding the price of aftermarket products included with vehicles for sale or lease, and in other representations to consumers. The lawsuit also alleged the dealership was engaged in unfair competition because of these actions. Both allegations are violations of California's Business and Professions Code.

Honda of Santa Monica was investigated by the District Attorney's Consumer Protection Division as part of an ongoing probe of deceptive and unfair practices by Los Angeles-area car dealerships. Deputy District Attorneys Jeffrey McGrath and Dana Aratani worked on the case.

Papageorge said attorneys for Honda of Santa Monica and its parent company worked cooperatively with the District Attorney's office to resolve the case. The stipulated judgment was filed in Los Angeles Superior Court late Friday and announced today.

The Consumer Protection Division has been looking at car dealerships for nearly a decade. One of the most highly publicized cases involved Gunderson Chevrolet in El Monte in 2001. That investigation resulted in both successful civil litigation and criminal convictions of seven former employees of the dealership. As in the Honda of Santa Monica case, a plan for restitution to Gunderson consumers was set up through the stipulated judgment of that civil lawsuit.

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Editors: Papageorge may be reached at 213-580-3305. McGrath may be reached at 213-580-3378. Aratani may be reached at 213-580-3337.

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Riley Pleads Guilty in Extortion Case

February 7, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles man pleaded guilty today to robbing “Girls Gone Wild” creator Joe Francis in his Bel Air home and forcing him at gunpoint to pose for a video that he then used to try and extort money, the District Attorney’s office announced.

Darnell Riley, 28, entered the guilty plea before Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Michael Kellogg. He also admitted the special allegation that he personally used a firearm. Judge Kellogg immediately sentenced Riley to 10 years and eight months in state prison.

The case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Hoon Chun from Major Crimes.

“The defendant admitted he robbed Joe Francis at gunpoint for the purpose of making a demeaning videotape and used that to try and extort money from him,” Chun said. “Fortunately, nobody was physically harmed. Under the circumstances, the settlement represents a fair resolution of this case.”

Chun added the victim is pleased the ordeal is over.

In exchange for the plea, the additional counts of burglary, kidnapping for ransom and carjacking were dismissed.

Riley admitted breaking into the victim’s home on Jan. 22, 2004. During the preliminary hearing, Francis testified that Riley first wanted \$100,000, then increased his demands to \$300,000 and \$500,000 and threatened to put the videotape on the Internet if he did not pay. Francis testified he was released after being driven a short distance in his Bentley.

Francis also testified that he learned who his assailant was in December 2004 when his ex-girlfriend Paris Hilton pulled him aside at a party and told

him what she had learned about the defendant.

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Couple Charged With Robbing 5-Year-Old Girl

February 7, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles man and woman were charged today with allegedly stealing a gold chain from around the neck of a 5-year-old girl, the District Attorney's office announced.

Julio Cesar Beltran, 18, (dob 9-25-87), and Patricia Serrano, 31, (dob 12-20-74), were charged in case No. VA093787 with one count each of second-degree robbery with the special allegation that they inflicted great bodily injury on the victim, said Deputy District Attorney Mario Coto-Lopez. The pair is scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in Metropolitan Superior Court, 1945 S. Hill St., Division 69. He is being held on \$80,000 bail and she is being held on \$105,000 bail.

Beltran allegedly jumped out the passenger door of a car Serrano was driving and grabbed a chain around the neck of the little girl, causing an 8-inch laceration on the back of her neck. The Jan. 26 incident was caught on videotape. Sheriff's deputies recognized the suspect and notified Huntington Park detectives.

Serrano was out on bail in another pending case, TA082089. She is charged with one count of possession of marijuana for sale.

If convicted, they each face up to five years in state prison.

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Nigerian Gets 10 Years Prison; Must Pay \$6.5 Million in Identity Theft Case

February 10, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Nigerian man who pleaded guilty in one of the largest identity theft cases filed in Los Angeles County was sent to prison today for 10 years and ordered to make restitution of \$6.5 million, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Jonathan Fairtlough of the High Tech Crimes Unit said Oluwatunji Oluwatosin, 42, of North Hollywood, was sentenced by Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Bob Bowers Jr. Oluwatosin pleaded guilty in Bowers' court on Dec. 20 to conspiracy to commit computer access fraud and grand theft.

Oluwatosin was indicted in August 2005 after an investigation by the Sheriff's Department, FBI, Secret Service, Postal Service and the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation. The indictment was part of the ongoing ChoicePoint investigation by the multi-agency High Tech Crimes Task Force.

The defendant was serving a 16-month prison term for a separate identity theft case when indicted last year.

Victim in the current case is Bank of America-Fleet Bank. Oluwatosin, in pleading guilty in December, admitted his theft was more than \$2.5 million.

The charges against Oluwatosin spanned a more than two-year period beginning in January 2002. It was alleged that a fraudulent business – "Pacific Collections" – using a Beverly Hills mail drop was set up with ChoicePoint and account information was accessed.

The process was repeated with mail drops in North Hollywood, Encino, North Hills and West Hollywood, creating bogus businesses that accessed ChoicePoint, the Georgia company that collects consumer data.

It was alleged that the personal information of more than 1,500 people was fraudulently accessed. Some of the information was used to access existing credit card accounts or set up new accounts through identity theft.

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Man Charged with Hit-and-Run

February 15, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A 28-year-old Hawthorne man has been charged with vehicular manslaughter and hit-and-run following a fatal hit-and-run crash on Sunday, the District Attorney's office announced.

Vernon G. Pettaway (dob 7-19-77) was charged Tuesday in case No. BA297963. He is scheduled to be arraigned today in Division 30 of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center. Police arrested him at his home several hours after Sunday's accident, which occurred about 5:15 p.m. at Vermont Avenue and 82nd Street in the Vermont Knolls section of Los Angeles.

The victim, James West, 59, of Los Angeles, was walking across Vermont Avenue when he was struck by a 2002 Lincoln LS, police said. The impact of the crash sent West flying through the air. The car then hit a bus and continued northbound on Vermont Avenue before it was abandoned. West was taken to California Hospital Medical Center, where he died.

Pettaway is being held on \$1.1 million bail. If convicted, it would be his third strike.

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Man Convicted of Murdering Model in 1992; D.A. Will Seek Death Penalty

February 15, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles jury convicted David Rademaker today of the 1992 capital murder of a model whose body was found in Angeles National Forest a little more than a year after she disappeared.

The eight-man, four-woman jury in the court of trial Judge Michael Johnson deliberated just over five days before convicting the 42-year-old defendant of first-degree murder. The jury also found true the special circumstance that the murder was committed during the crime of kidnapping. The jury found not true the special circumstance that the murder was committed during the crime of sodomy.

The trial's penalty phase was scheduled to begin on Friday morning. The District Attorney's office will seek the death penalty.

Rademaker was convicted of murdering 21-year-old Kimberly Pandelios, who lived with her husband and their 15-month-old son in Northridge. The young family had moved to California from Florida a year before so the victim could pursue a modeling career.

Pandelios was last seen about 8 a.m. on Feb. 27, 1992. Investigators said they were told by her husband that she had made several contacts to do a photo shoot.

The day she disappeared, her car was seen by a Sheriff's deputy who was driving to work along Angeles Crest Highway. It was parked by the side of the road about 50 yards from the Monte Cristo campground. A day later, another deputy driving along Angeles Crest on the way home from work spotted the car engulfed in flames.

The area was searched and some evidence was collected. An appointment

book and other items were found by a hiker about two months later. Pandelios' partial remains were found on March 2, 1993, when hikers came upon a human skull about a mile and a half from the Monte Cristo campground. Other remains and additional evidence were found nearby.

The case originally was investigated by Los Angeles police, but later it was turned over to Sheriff's homicide investigators. Sheriff's homicide detectives had investigated another model's murder in 1998. That case resulted in the conviction of another man.

Sheriff's investigators received information that led to the probe of Rademaker in connection with the Pandelios case. He was indicted in April 2004 by the Los Angeles County Grand Jury and has remained in custody without bail.

The case is being prosecuted by Deputy District Attorneys John Monaghan and Patrick Dixon of the Major Crimes Division.

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Former NFL Player Pleads; Sent to Prison for Evading Police

February 16, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

WEST COVINA – Former NFL defensive back Darryll Lamont Lewis pleaded no contest today to evading CHP officers last November and was sent to state prison for two years and eight months, the District Attorney's office announced.

Lewis also pleaded no contest to a second felony count of possession of methamphetamine stemming from a 30-minute chase in the San Gabriel Valley on Nov. 7 of last year.

While out on \$85,000 bail in that case, Lewis was arrested in connection with a Nov. 28, 2005, incident at Queen of the Valley Hospital in West Covina. He pleaded no contest today to two misdemeanor counts of taking a vehicle and resisting arrest in connection with that incident, said Deputy District Attorney Keith Thompson.

Citrus Superior Court Judge Mark Grant Nelson sentenced Lewis immediately. He has been in custody on \$500,000 bail since the second arrest.

Earlier this month, another Superior Court judge reinstated criminal hearings against Lewis. Judge Drew Edwards of the Mental Health Department ruled that Lewis was competent to stand trial. The case was transferred back to Citrus Court in West Covina for the scheduling of a preliminary hearing.

Lewis, 37, was arrested at his parents' West Covina home after the Nov. 7 pursuit. After playing at the University of Arizona, he was drafted into National Football League, first by the Oilers, then in Houston, and later for the San Diego Chargers and the Denver Broncos.

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Attn: Assignment & News Editors Courageous Citizen Awards Pasadena

February 21, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley will present four Courageous Citizen awards at a noon luncheon on Wednesday, Feb. 22, at the Pasadena Hilton, 168 S. Los Robles Ave. The luncheon ceremony, which begins at 12:45 p.m., is being hosted by the Rotary Club of Pasadena.

The honorees include a 27-year-old Los Angeles man who was shot by a gang member and managed to drive himself and a friend, who was also shot, to the nearest hospital before collapsing. Also being honored are a 29-year-old Glendale man who assisted the victim of a hit-and-run collision; and a La Puente woman and a West Covina man who intervened to save a woman being attacked by a knife-wielding man.

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Retired Priest Convicted of Child Sexual Molestation

February 22, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A jury today convicted retired priest Michael Wempe of one count of sexually molesting a child under 16, but deadlocked on four other charges, the District Attorney's office announced.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Curtis Rappe ordered Wempe, 66, taken into custody after the six-man, six-woman jury found him guilty of one count of oral copulation of a child under 16. The judge declared a mistrial on three counts of lewd act on a child under 14 and one count of oral copulation of a child under 16 after jurors said they were deadlocked on those counts.

Deputy District Attorney Todd Hicks with the Sex Crimes Division who prosecuted the case said the office will decide whether to retry Wempe on the four counts.

Wempe was first charged in June 2003 with 42 counts of child sexual molestation, but the case was later dismissed after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that California's law extending the statute of limitations was unconstitutional.

He was rearrested in September 2003 after a new victim, who was 11 when the abuse began in 1990, came forward to authorities. Wempe faces up to three years in state prison for the conviction on the one count. He returns to court March 10 when prosecutors will announce whether they will retry the four counts.

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District Attorney Honors Courageous Citizens

February 22, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Four individuals who exhibited acts of heroism and bravery were honored today by District Attorney Steve Cooley during the Courageous Citizens Awards Ceremony sponsored by the Rotary Club of Pasadena.

“I thank our honorees, who gave selflessly and courageously to help others,” Cooley said during a ceremony at the Pasadena Hilton. “They’ve testified under pressure and done everything in their power – even to the point of placing themselves at risk – to assist the victims in these horrible crimes. Doing so, they’ve reminded us all that people remain Los Angeles’ greatest asset.”

The District Attorney’s Office created the Courageous Citizen Award in 1985 to commend those individuals who have acted at considerable personal risk to help a victim of crime, assist in the capture of a suspect, or testify in the face of extraordinary pressures.

The awards were presented to recipients nominated by deputy district attorneys. Honorees were (Information on each recipient follows.)

- LaTeef Williams, Los Angeles
On Sept. 18, 2004, 27-year-old LaTeef Williams and his friend, Orsi Aguirre, were each shot by a gang member as they were stopped at a red light. Aguirre was shot seven times; Williams was shot five times. Despite his serious wounds, Williams was able to drive to the nearest hospital for help before collapsing at its entrance. By doing so, Williams saved both of their lives.

In addition, Williams identified DeAndre Deshawn George as the shooter. Even though George was a violent, self-admitted gang member, Williams willingly testified. George was convicted and

sentenced to 40 years to life in prison on Jan. 30.

- Severo Cruz, Glendale
On Nov. 19, 2005, 29-year-old Severo Cruz witnessed a hit-and-run collision caused by a speeding driver. He ran to the victim's car to render aid and realized that the driver, who was unconscious, and his passenger were trapped. Cruz reached inside the victim's vehicle and turned off the ignition so the car would not explode or catch fire.

The driver who was struck by the speeding vehicle died of his injuries. The hit-and-run driver, Andranik Atshemyan, fled to Canada but was ultimately returned and is awaiting his murder trial.

- Sandy Macias, La Puente
Freddy Sandoval, West Covina
On April 28, 2005, Sandy Macias, 43, saw a knife-wielding man assaulting a woman and tried to intervene. When she was unable to pull off the assailant, she ran to Sandoval's house and summoned him for assistance. Sandoval, 31, pulled the attacker away from the victim and kept her safe.

The attacker, Kevin Martin, tried to kill his victim with a kitchen knife. He pleaded guilty to attempted murder, but was ultimately found not guilty by reason of insanity and committed to a state mental hospital.

CONTACT: Mark Delgado or Carol Baker, (213) 974-7401.

jr

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Physician Pleads in Fraud Case; Faces Three-Year Prison Term

February 23, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A San Marino physician pleaded no contest today to tax fraud in connection with failure to report hundreds of thousands of dollars in income to the state, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Albert H. Mackenzie of the Fraud Interdiction Program said Dr. Saud Salim Rayyis, 69, pleaded no contest to one felony count of tax fraud in exchange for a three-year state prison term. Mackenzie said Rayyis must surrender his medical license on or before March 17, when he is scheduled to be sentenced by Superior Court Judge Steven Van Sicklen.

Mackenzie said Rayyis also will have to pay fines, restitution and penalties of up to \$800,000. That was the amount that was frozen in several bank accounts belonging to the physician during the investigation by the state Franchise Tax Board and the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation. The defendant's Mercedes Benz was seized and a court order freezing an action on his San Marino home was obtained.

Rayyis was charged in August 2004 with five felony counts of tax fraud involving alleged failure to report \$4 million in income from 1999 to 2003. The additional counts will be dismissed at the time of sentencing.

The defendant's medical license was suspended by the court on October 2004. He has been in custody since that time.

Mackenzie said the investigation of Rayyis was conducted by the California Franchise Tax Board and the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation.

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Man Accused of Murdering Sheriff's Deputy Arrested in Mexico; Faces Extradition

February 24, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

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(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – District Attorney Steve Cooley today hailed the joint efforts of the Sheriff's Department, the U. S. Marshal's Service, the Mexican government and his own prosecutors that resulted in yesterday's capture in Mexico of the man accused of gunning down Sheriff's Deputy David William March nearly four years ago.

Calling it a "landmark day," Cooley said, "When a police officer is murdered, we don't forgive, we don't forget and we don't give up."

Jorge Arroyo Garcia, 29, known by many aliases including Armando Garcia, was arrested just after noon yesterday in Tonalá, a small town just outside Guadalajara. Officers from Mexico's Agencia Federal de Investigaciones arrested Garcia without incident as he left his uncle's home. He was taken to Mexico City, where he was jailed pending court hearings on extradition to Los Angeles.

He is accused of murdering Sheriff's Deputy David March on April 29, 2002, in the east San Gabriel Valley city of Irwindale. March, on routine patrol in a black-and-white Sheriff's cruiser, stopped a car allegedly driven by Garcia. The deputy was shot with a 9 mm semi-automatic handgun and left bleeding in the street. He died later in the day.



It is believed that Garcia, a convicted drug dealer, fled to Mexico within hours of the shooting. At the time Deputy March was killed, Garcia was wanted on two unrelated counts of attempted murder.

In late November of last year, the Mexican Supreme Court reversed an earlier ruling that hampered extradition of suspected murderers such as Garcia who faced a possible life prison term in the United States. The Mexican court's November ruling allowed extradition of criminal suspects facing life-in-prison sentences abroad.

Cooley had lobbied both before and after the original Mexican Supreme Court ruling in 2001 for the opportunity to extradite murder suspects to the United States to stand trial. Every legal, political and legislative avenue was used to ensure justice in the March murder, as well as hundreds of other killings of Los Angeles County, California and U.S. citizens whose accused murderers fled to Mexico to avoid extradition.

The Nov. 29, 2005, ruling in Mexico allowed the District Attorney's office to file a special circumstance murder case against Garcia. That case, filed last month, charges him not only with the March murder but with the two attempted murder cases, also from 2002, and two charges of illegal weapons possession. The complaint alleged that Garcia murdered a police officer during performance of his duties and that he killed the deputy to avoid arrest. Both special circumstances would result in Garcia's imprisonment for the remainder of his life if he is convicted.

Joining Cooley at the news conference were Sheriff Lee Baca, U.S. Marshal Adam N. Torres, members of the March family and Mexican Consul-General Ruben Beltran, along with prosecutors from the District Attorney's Crimes Against Police Officers Section and investigators who worked on the case.

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Welfare Fraud Sweep Defendants Appear in Court

February 24, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Three of 14 defendants charged in a series of welfare fraud cases were scheduled to appear for arraignment today in Los Angeles Superior Court.

One of the defendants was arrested yesterday by District Attorney's investigators. Two others surrendered. The defendants – all women – are scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in Division 30. They are:

- Ani Chatalian (dob 2-22-1969) of Los Angeles, charged in case No. BA 298174. She surrendered today. Her husband and co-defendant, Gagik Karapetian (7-7-1962) was arrested yesterday. His arraignment is pending. The couple is charged with cheating the welfare system out of \$213,860 between 1994 and 2005.
- Hengameh Shirvanbigy (dob 3-6-1955) of Chatsworth, charged in case No. BA 298126 with defrauding the system out of \$126,514 between 1994 and 2004. She surrendered today.
- Leticia Dorise Smith (dob 8-11-1974) of Long Beach, charged in case No. BA 296818 with three others in an alleged \$73,856 theft from the welfare system. The three other people charged in the case remain at large. Smith was arrested yesterday.

District Attorney's investigators yesterday arrested nine of the 14 defendants charged in seven cases. The arrests were made throughout Los Angeles County.

Head Deputy District Attorney James Cosper of the Welfare Fraud Division said the seven cases involved losses of \$793,115 to various taxpayer-supported public assistance programs.

Terming it "just the tip of the welfare fraud iceberg," Cosper noted that in the

past seven months, attorneys in his division have filed cases alleging a total loss of nearly \$8 million. "What is truly shocking is that almost \$4 million was lost in just 28 cases," he said.

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Man Charged with Murder Following Fatal Crash

February 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – An Inglewood man suspected of driving a speeding pickup truck that slammed into a taxi, killing the cab driver, was charged today with murder with a special circumstance, making it a potential death penalty case, the District Attorney's office announced.

Jeremy Peterson, 29 (dob12-16-76), is set to be arraigned after 1:30 p.m. in Division 30 of the Foltz Criminal Justice Center. He is charged in case No. BA298657 with one count of murder with the special circumstance of flight during an attempted kidnapping, said Deputy District Attorney Greg Somes. Peterson also is charged with one count each of attempted kidnapping and evading police causing death. He is being held without bail.

Police went to the area of Third Street and Fairfax Avenue shortly before 4 a. m. last Thursday after a woman reported via cell phone that she was being followed by a suspect in a pickup truck. After police arrived the woman pointed out a pickup truck. Police began a pursuit of the speeding vehicle as it sped north on Fairfax Avenue. The truck crashed broadside into a taxi at Santa Monica Boulevard and Fairfax Avenue. The cab driver, Asatur Tokatlyan, 42, died on the way to the hospital, officials said.

Prosecutors will decide at a later date whether to seek the death penalty.

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Father Charged with Murdering Infant Son

February 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

POMONA – A La Verne man was charged today with murdering his 3-month-old son and the infant's mother was charged child abuse, the District Attorney's office announced.

Anthony Allen Pevehouse, 27 (dob 10-2-1978), is scheduled to be arraigned tomorrow morning in Department F of Pomona Superior Court on one count of murder, one count of assault on a child causing death and one count of child abuse. He is being held on \$1 million bail.

Amanda Christine Pevehouse, 23 (dob 3-13-1982), is scheduled to be arraigned on March 28 in Department F on one count of child abuse and one court of being an accessory after the fact. She is being held on \$100,000 bond.

The couple was charged in case No. KA 074208. If convicted, Pevehouse faces a possible maximum sentence of 25 years to life in prison. His wife faces a possible maximum sentence of six years and eight months.

The infant, Gavin, was hospitalized on Feb. 6 after Amanda Pevehouse called 911 and said the baby was not breathing. The child was taken to Pomona Valley hospital Medical Center, then to Orange County Children's Hospital, where he died on Feb. 20.

Authorities said the child had been injured several days prior to the mother calling 911. His injuries including head trauma, they added.

The La Verne Police Department arrested both parents yesterday and the case was filed late today by Deputy District attorney Gail Ehrlich of the Pomona office.

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Attorney Accused of Using the Internet to Lure Underage Girls Ordered to Stand Trial

January 4, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

SAN FERNANDO – An attorney accused of using the Internet to lure underage girls was ordered today to stand trial on attempted child abuse and sending harmful matter by electronic mail.

Deputy District Attorney Tannaz Mokayef said that San Fernando Superior Court Judge Alice Hill ordered Arthur George Crabtree to stand trial following a preliminary hearing of the evidence against him. Crabtree, 44, is scheduled to appear for arraignment in Department H of San Fernando Superior Court on Feb. 8.

Crabtree, who has a law office in Glendale and lives in the Santa Clarita Valley, was arrested a year ago by Sheriff's deputies at the Greyhound Bus Station in downtown Los Angeles. The arrest was part of an undercover sting by a task force aimed at those who prey on teenagers via the Internet. The Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is one of the local agencies participating with federal authorities on the task force.

The defendant was charged with six felony and three misdemeanor counts. Judge Hill ordered him held to answer on all: two felony counts each of attempted lewd act upon a child, attempted sending harmful matter and attempted child molestation, and three misdemeanor counts of attempted child molestation.

Mokayef said Crabtree was arrested after corresponding via the Internet with a person he thought was a 13-year-old girl. He sent her a bus ticket and \$20, making arrangements to meet her at the Greyhound Bus Depot in Los Angeles on Jan. 19, 2005. The defendant was arrested in the bus station, where he waited in vain for about an hour for the "girl" to arrive, authorities said.

Crabtree remains free on \$100,000 bail.

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Three Strikes Reform Act of 2006 Filed with California AG

January 6, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

The Three Strikes Reform Act of 2006 was filed with Attorney General Bill Lockyer on Jan. 4 as the first step to putting the initiative before California voters in November.

The initiative would ensure that the Three Strikes law is applied evenly throughout California by mandating that a 25-year-to-life sentence can be imposed only if the third offense is a serious or violent felony, except in limited specified circumstances. The initiative also provides for resentencing of inmates who previously received a Three Strikes sentence of 25 years to life, but would not receive the same sentence under the provisions of the proposed initiative.

The initiative generally mirrors the Los Angeles County prosecutorial policy implemented in December 2000 by District Attorney Steve Cooley. Cooley and attorney Brian T. Dunn of the Cochran law firm in Los Angeles jointly submitted the initiative.

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"Dreadlocks Bandit" Sentenced to More Than 1,000 Years in Prison for Conviction of Multiple Bank Robberies

January 11, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

TORRANCE – The man dubbed the "Dreadlocks Bandit" was sentenced to 1,210 (CQ) years to life in prison today following his conviction on 19 counts of robbery at banks throughout the South Bay and Los Angeles areas, the District Attorney's Office announced.

Torrance Superior Court Judge Eric Taylor also sentenced David Lee Robinson, 54, to 22 consecutive life sentences in addition to the 1,210 years in prison, said Deputy District Attorney Warren Kato.

Robinson was convicted in October on a total of 22 counts of robbery, including three counts of attempted robbery.

In 2004, Robinson was on federal probation after serving 14 years for robbing 30 banks during a two-year crime spree when he embarked on yet another crime spree, robbing more than two dozen banks throughout Los Angeles County – from the South Bay to Beverly Hills, Encino, Santa Monica and Glendale. A total of \$70,000 was taken, authorities said. The first robbery occurred on Aug. 19, 2004 at a Cathay Bank in Los Angeles. During the robberies, he sometimes threatened to shoot or kill the bank tellers.

He was arrested Oct. 30, 2004 driving out of the Western Financial Bank parking lot at Carson Street and Hawthorne Boulevard in Torrance, which had been robbed several days earlier.

Before he was sentenced, Robinson admitted to having six prior strikes against him, Kato said.

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Guilty Pleas In South Bay Tow Yard Case

January 12, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – The manager of a South Bay tow yard and the company itself have pleaded guilty to felony counts of perjury and conspiracy as their months-long court trial was wrapping up in Los Angeles Superior Court, the District Attorney's office announced today.

S&W Towing and Storage Corp., which contracts with the City of Hawthorne to tow and impound vehicles, pleaded guilty this afternoon to six counts of subornation of perjury and three counts of conspiracy. Manager John Germain, 46, pleaded guilty to identical charges on Tuesday during closing arguments before Superior Court Judge Larry Paul Fidler. The trial had been under way for three months before Fidler, who was hearing the case without a jury.

Deputy District Attorney Frank Tavelman of the Target Crimes Division said Germain faces a possible maximum state prison term of 11 years when he returns to court for sentencing on May 5. The company also is to be sentenced at that time. Both Germain and the company could be fined and ordered to make restitution.

Charges against Germain and the company were filed two years ago. The complaint alleged the crimes occurred in 2003 and involved illegally claiming ownership of impounded cars, which were sold. There was no public auction, the prosecution alleged.

The prosecution also alleged the prices of cars sold by S&W were underreported to the Department of Motor Vehicles. Collectors were dispatched to the original owners, many of them with low incomes, claiming the sales of the vehicles did not cover fees and other charges.

The conspiracy counts to which Germain and the company pleaded were conspiracy to violate California's Lien Sale Act, conspiracy to defraud a

person of property and conspiracy to pursue a false suit by wrongfully turning accounts over to collectors.

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Gang Member Ordered to Stand Trial for County Officer's Murder

January 13, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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(213) 974-3525

COMPTON – A gang member was ordered today to stand trial for murder in connection with the fatal shooting of a county police captain near Compton a year and a half ago, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Darren Levine of the Crimes Against Police Officers Section (CAPOS) said Compton Superior Court Judge Steven G. Suzukawa found after a four-day preliminary hearing that there was sufficient evidence for the prosecution to take 22-year-old Miguel Angel Magallon's case to trial.

Magallon was ordered to stand trial on one count of capital murder and one of attempted robbery. The special circumstances of murder of a police officer in performance of his duty, murder to benefit a street gang, drive-by shooting murder and murder during an attempted robbery were upheld by the judge.

One of the witnesses who testified against Magallon at the preliminary hearing was 21-year-old accomplice Orvis Camilo Anthony, who on Monday pleaded guilty to first-degree murder and admitted the gang allegation and a principal armed allegation. He faces a 50-year-to-life sentence. Sentencing has been scheduled for July 11 for Anthony, who pleaded just prior to the start of what was to be a preliminary hearing for both defendants.

Testimony at the preliminary hearing indicated that Magallon was the one who fatally shot Michael Sparkes early Aug. 10, 2004. Sparkes was off-duty and riding his bicycle in the Rosewood area near East Redondo Beach and Avalon boulevards when confronted by Magallon and Anthony. Magallon allegedly was carrying an AK-47 assault rifle.

There was an exchange of gunfire. Sparkes, 53, a captain with the Los Angeles County Police Department, was killed. Magallon was wounded in the shootout. He was hospitalized for several days after the shooting.

Magallon and Anthony, who also was arrested shortly after the murder, were charged on Aug. 12, 2004. Both remain in custody without bail.

A decision on whether to seek the death penalty against Magallon will be made as the case moves closer to trial. Magallon is scheduled to appear in Compton Superior Court on Jan. 25 for arraignment.

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D.A.'s Office to Receive Money from AT&T Settlement

January 17, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – The Los Angeles County District Attorney's office and county Public Works Department will share more than \$1 million as part of a \$25 million settlement with AT&T to end a lawsuit for the company's underground storage fuel tanks.

State Attorney General Bill Lockyer announced today the settlement to end a lawsuit charging the company with repeatedly failing to test and repair its vast web of underground storage tanks. The L.A. County District Attorney's office was among the six District Attorneys around the state who formed the leadership team with the A.G. for this joint investigation.

The Environmental Law Section of the L.A. County D. A.'s office assisted in the joint investigation and will receive \$700,000 in civil penalties and costs from the settlement. The county Public Works Department will receive \$440,000. Six other cities in Los Angeles County will receive approximately \$288,000 for a total of nearly \$1.4 million.

The lawsuit alleges violations at AT&T's 531 underground facilities throughout the state. Nearly 50 of the non-compliant systems have been used for motor vehicle fuel, which contains MTBE. The lawsuit also alleges that AT&T not only failed to meet deadlines for inspection at many of its facilities, even when it did conduct some tests, AT&T failed to report containment system problems to state and local safety regulators. Furthermore, the prosecutors found that when AT&T discovered problems, it delayed repairs and continued to operate the systems that had potential to pollute the environment.

CONTACT: Teresa Schilling, state A.G.'s office, (916) 324-5500; Deputy District Attorney Dan Wright, (213) 580.8721.

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Former L.A. County Real Estate Manager Sentenced

January 18, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

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[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A former manager in the Los Angeles County Real Estate Division was ordered today to complete 200 hours of community service as part of a probationary term for failing to disclose economic interest in property owned by her and her husband, the District Attorney's office announced.

Cheryl Fuerth, 57, left county employ last month as part of disposition of her criminal case, said Deputy District Attorney Jennifer Lentz Snyder of the Public Integrity Division. In September 2005, Fuerth pleaded guilty to one misdemeanor count of violating the California Government Code for failing to disclose economic interests. Two other misdemeanor and seven felony counts of perjury were dismissed as part of disposition of the case.

Fuerth, of Long Beach, was sentenced by Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Michael S. Luros to three years probation. She also was fined \$200.

Snyder said that Fuerth, manager of Lease Acquisitions for the county, failed to disclose real properties in which she and/or her spouse, Claus Marx, had an ownership interest. Marx, a retired county employee at the time of the crime, had been director of the county's Real Estate Division.

Between March 1997 and March 2002, Fuerth, her husband or both of them owned three properties in Hermosa Beach, Long Beach and Whittier, Snyder said. The prosecutor said Further failed to discuss this on annual economic interest statements required for real estate division employees.

Fuerth has been free on her own recognizance since she was charged in September 2004.

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Suspended Police Lieutenant Accused Using Department Internet to Solicit Prostitution

January 19, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A suspended Arcadia police lieutenant appeared in Los Angeles Superior Court today in connection with criminal charges alleging that he used the department's computer to solicit prostitution on the Internet, the District Attorney's office announced.

Kenneth Kuwahara surrendered for arraignment, but the proceeding was postponed until Feb. 2. Superior Court Commissioner James N. Bianco allowed the defendant, who appeared without an attorney, to remain free on his own recognizance.

Deputy District Attorney Renee Korn of the Justice System Integrity Division said an Arcadia police representative was in court to serve Kawahara with a notice of intention to terminate his employment with the department. He has been suspended for several months during an investigation launched by the Arcadia Police Department early last summer and turned over to the District Attorney's Bureau of Investigation.

Kuwahara, 40 (dob 6-4-1965), was charged on Wednesday, Jan. 11, in case No. BA296109 with one felony count each of false personation and identity theft, and four misdemeanor counts of soliciting prostitution. The complaint, filed as an arrest warrant, alleged the defendant solicited prostitution from four women between Jan. 1 and May 19, 2005.

Authorities said the crimes occurred while Kuwahara was working as a watch commander. The complaint alleged the defendant used a subordinate officer's name for an email account.

Korn said that the Arcadia Police Department's internal computer-monitoring software program picked up the communications. She said the department's

employees had been provided with written notice that the police computers were monitored.

If convicted on all counts, Kuwahara could be sentenced to a maximum of three years in state prison.

sg

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Statement from the D.A.'s Office on Arrest of Former Priest Michael Baker

January 19, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES -- Today's arrest of Michael Stephen Baker by the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department is in connection with the ongoing investigation into allegations of child molestation involving present and former Catholic priests in the Los Angeles Archdiocese.

The District Attorney's office has worked closely with the Sheriff, the Los Angeles Police Department, state and federal agencies, and the governments of other counties in connection with this ongoing criminal probe.

A filing decision on Baker is expected on Monday with arraignment early next week.

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Jury Convicts Man in Boyle Heights Kidnapping

January 19, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles jury today convicted a man of kidnapping, attempted murder and robbery today in connection with last year's abduction of another man who was taken from Boyle Heights to Mexico, the District Attorney's office announced.

Manuel De Jesus Turcios, 37, faces a maximum sentence of life in prison with the possibility of parole for the crimes. He is scheduled to be sentenced on Feb. 14 by Superior Court Commissioner Paul M. Enright, who presided over the week-long trial.

Turcios was convicted of the April 12, 2005, abduction of Julio Hernandez, 41. Hernandez was kidnapped from Fifth Street and Euclid Avenue in the Boyle Heights area and taken to an isolated area in Tijuana. He was threatened with a knife, but saved when a car pulled up to the location where he had been taken.

Hernandez was rescued by a couple who took him to the Red Cross in Tijuana for treatment of bruises and lacerations. Mexican authorities turned him over Los Angeles Police detectives at the border.

During the investigation, LAPD detectives learned of a dispute between the victim and Turcios. They already were on the investigative trail to Tijuana.

Turcios was arrested in Los Angeles and charged on April 14, 2005. He has remained in jail on \$1 million bail since then.

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Man Charged in Busjacking

January 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

COMPTON – A 29-year-old man suspected of abducting school bus driver from a Compton bus yard and forcing her to drive to Fresno County was charged today with kidnapping and carjacking, the District Attorney's office announced.

Arraignment for Christopher Lee Andrews, (dob 9-11-76), is scheduled for some time after 1:30 p.m. today in Compton Superior Court, Division 12, said Deputy District Attorney Marilyn Seymour. He is being held on \$1 million bail. He is charged in case No. TA083034 with one count each of kidnapping to commit another crime, kidnapping for carjacking, first-degree robbery and carjacking. This is his second strike.

On Wednesday, Andrews allegedly hid on a school bus operated by First Student in a Gardena bus yard and forced the woman driver to take off. No students were aboard the bus. When they were near Fresno, the driver managed to get away by telling her kidnapper she had diabetes and had to go to a rest stop. Andrews was arrested by the Fresno Sheriff's Department.

If convicted, Andrews is facing up to life in prison.

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Strier Convicted of Attempted Murder

January 20, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Thousand Oaks man was convicted today with the attempted first-degree murder of a civil attorney outside the Van Nuys Superior Courthouse two years ago, the District Attorney's Office announced.

The five-man, seven-woman Los Angeles Superior Court jury deliberated 1½ days before finding William Strier, 66, guilty of shooting Gerald E. Curry five times as Curry ran for cover and ducked behind a tree. The shooting occurred on Oct. 31, 2003, and was captured on national television by news reporters and cameramen who were in Van Nuys awaiting developments in the Robert Blake case.

The case was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Jim Falco.

Strier was allegedly upset over a probate case in which Curry, of Simi Valley, was acting as the attorney. The incident began about 10:20 a.m. when Strier approached Curry, pulled out two guns and began shooting. After Strier emptied his guns, he placed them back in his pockets and casually walked away. He was tackled by a Traffic Court judge who is also a reserve Sheriff's Deputy and taken into custody.

The jury found Strier not guilty of one count of making criminal threats against his court-appointed trustee who oversaw his trust fund and threatened her.

Sentencing is set for Feb. 24 by Judge Rand Rubin. Strier is facing life in prison.

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Former L.A. Catholic Archdiocese Priest Charged with Child Molestation

January 23, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Michael Stephen Baker, a former Catholic priest in the Los Angeles Archdiocese, was charged today with molesting a boy over an 11-year period ending in 1995, the District Attorney's office announced.

Baker, 58 (dob 12-26-1947), was scheduled to appear for arraignment after 1:30 p.m. today in Division 30 of the Los Angeles Superior Court, fifth floor, Criminal Justice Center, 210 W. Temple St. Baker was arrested by Sheriff's investigators on Thursday at Los Angeles International Airport after returning from a trip to the Far East.

He was charged in case No. BA296694 with eight counts of oral copulation of a person under the age of 18. Deputy District Attorney Marc Beart of the Sex Crimes Division said the victim was sexually assaulted by the defendant from 1984 until 1995. The victim was 7 when Baker, then a priest at St. Hillary's Rectory in Pico Rivera, met the boy and his family.

Beart said the boy and his family eventually moved back to Mexico, but Baker visited them there, and later brought the victim to the United States for visits in Los Angeles, Palm Springs and Arizona. After the boy turned 18, there was no further contact with Baker, the prosecutor said.

The complaint recommended that Baker, who lives in Long Beach, be held on \$1 million bail. If convicted, the defendant could be sentenced to a maximum of six years in state prison.

Archdiocese officials have said that Baker was removed from the church in 2000. In 2003, the District Attorney's office charged Baker with 34 counts of sexual molestation involving six victims. That case, along with the cases of nearly a dozen other former Los Angeles priests, was dismissed the same year due to the U.S. Supreme Court's ruling involving the statute of limitation

on child molestation.

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Murder Suspect Arrested in Mexico, D.A. Announces

[- Read the L.A. Times Article -](#)

January 25, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A confidential tip prompted by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Web site has led to the arrest in Mexico of a murder suspect, L. A. County Dist. Atty. Steve Cooley said today.

Cooley said an informant discovered Daniel Perez, 34, was wanted in Los Angeles and San Bernardino counties after reading information on www.escapingjustice.com, a Web site that provides information on murders committed in California by suspects who have fled to Mexico to hide out.

The arrest of Perez Monday in Mazatlan is the first such arrest for extradition to Los Angeles since the Mexican Supreme Court ruled on Nov. 29 that criminal suspects facing life in prison sentences abroad can be extradited from Mexico for prosecution, Cooley said.

"Murderers can no longer hide in Mexico to escape justice in California," Cooley said. "After the landmark Mexican Supreme Court ruling in November, we immediately began the process to start bringing back suspects like Daniel Perez."

Perez allegedly fled to Mexico in 1999 while he was on trial for the attempted murder of his estranged wife, Anabella Vara. Hours after Anabella's father, Carlos, testified against Perez, Carlos Vara was fatally shot in his Fontana



home by a masked gunman. Perez, who had been out on \$1 million bail during the trial, failed to appear in court the following day and was later convicted by a Los Angeles jury. He was sentenced to 33 years to life plus an additional life term in prison.

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Teen Charged as Adult in Exploding Pen Case

January 25, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

EL MONTE – A teenager declared unfit to be tried as a juvenile was charged as an adult today with nine felony counts stemming from explosions of booby-trapped pens near high schools in Rosemead and El Monte.

Brian Rocha, who was 17 years old when the incidents occurred between August and December of last year, was declared unfit in Pomona Juvenile Court. Rocha, now 18 (dob 12/24/1987), of Rosemead, is scheduled to be arraigned on the adult case after 1:30 p.m. today in Division 3 of Rio Hondo Superior Court, 11234 E. Valley Blvd., El Monte.

Rocha is charged in case No. KA073825 with three counts of explosion of a destructive device causing bodily injury, two counts of possession of a destructive device near a school; one count of sale or transportation of a destructive device, one count of maintaining a booby-trap device, one count of assault with a deadly weapon, and one count of possession of the ingredients to make a destructive device.

The defendant currently is in juvenile custody. The complaint recommends bail of \$2.65 million. Rocha faces a possible state prison term of more than 25 years if convicted as charged.

The incidents involving the exploding pens, which blew up when their caps were removed, occurred on Aug. 24, 2005, at Rosemead High School; Sept. 17, 2005, on a street in Rosemead; and Dec. 2, 2005, at El Monte High School. El Monte police acting on information gathered during their investigation of the Dec. 2 incident, arrested Rocha on Dec. 7, 2005.

All three people who picked up the pens and tried to open them received injuries to their hands or faces or both. Two were students, one at Rosemead High and the other at El Monte High. The other was a woman who was walking along Rosemead Boulevard in Rosemead last September

when she saw and picked up one of the booby-trapped pens.

The case was filed by Deputy District Attorney Jaime T. Hernandez. It has not yet been assigned to a trial prosecutor.

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Ten Alleged Welfare Cheats Arrested in Early-Morning Sweep

January 26, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – Ten alleged welfare cheats were arrested by District Attorney's investigators today in connection with six separate criminal cases charging that taxpayer-funded public assistance programs were defrauded out of nearly \$1.2 million. Four additional defendants are being sought.

Those arrested today are scheduled for arraignment tomorrow or Monday in Division 30 of Los Angeles Superior Court. Also scheduled to be arraigned tomorrow is a defendant already in custody on another matter and a defendant who is expected to surrender.

Head Deputy District Attorney James Cospers of the Welfare Fraud Division said the cases were filed earlier this week as felony complaints for arrest warrants. Teams of investigators arrested most of those this morning at their homes and without incident.

Although all of the cases are scheduled to be tried in the downtown Los Angeles Criminal Justice Center, defendants come from throughout the county.

Cospers termed the loss a "tragic looting of the public treasury." He said that more than \$600,000 was stolen from agencies responsible for providing care for children whose parents are gainfully employed.

The cases are:

- BA296639 against Carolyn Ann Jones, 44 (dob 11-2-1961) and Darrell Carey, 48 (dob 4-25-1957), of Los Angeles. Jones and Carey, who are husband and wife, are accused of stealing \$380,246 in cash assistance, food stamp benefits, child care assistance, state Medi-Cal benefits and in Section 8 housing assistance. The theft occurred from

1997 to 2005, authorities said.

- BA294417 against Kathy Goldenreed, 28 (dob 9-11-1977); Walter Goode Jr., 48 (dob 11-15-1957); and Bessie Golden-Jones, 51 (dob 8-5-1954), all of Lancaster; Denetrice Spencer, 36 (dob 8-14-1969), of Long Beach; and Jovaun Rommand Golden, 29 (dob 2-28-1976), who currently is in the Los Angeles County Jail. The loss alleged in the case is \$345,719, again to nearly every public assistance program available. It was alleged Goldenreed conspired with the other defendants to present phony employment and child care records.
- BA293501 charges Annttoniette Spriggs, 30 (dob 10-25-1970) and Latoya Wilbert, 22 (dob 10-5-1983), both of Palmdale, and Alfonso Perry, 59 (dob 8-5-1946), a transient. The loss alleged was \$196,756 to several programs between 2001 and 2005.
- BA296663 charges Pogos Aslanyan, 45 (dob 9-20-1960), and his estranged wife, Shnorik Aslanyan, 38 (dob 12-3-1967), of Glendale, and Pogos Aslanyan's brother, Ruben, 35 (dob 7-18-1970), of Montebello. It was alleged \$107,665 was stolen between 1988 and 2000. Funds from the fraud were used to purchase a home for Ruben Aslanyan, authorities said.
- BA296571 charges Annie Sarkis Rassam, 35 (dob 2-24-1970) and Issa Rassam, 40 (dob 1-2-1966), of Panorama City. It was alleged they stole \$84,181 between 2001 and 2006. Authorities said they were collecting welfare even though they, among other things, had foreign bank accounts of more than \$100,000 and traveled to Lebanon 22 times during the same period.
- BA296606 charges Dana Lowe, 39 (dob 7-26-1966), of Compton. The loss was alleged to be \$84,065. Authorities said the defendant defrauded Crystal Stairs, which provides funds for child care for parents who are gainfully employed.

Arrested today were Jones, Carey, Goldenreed, Spencer, Spriggs, Wilbert, Pogos and Ruben Aslanyan, and Annie and Issa Rassam. Golden is in county jail on another case and is scheduled to be arraigned tomorrow. Shnorik Aslanyan is expected to surrender tomorrow and also appear in Los Angeles Superior Court Division 30 for arraignment.

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Man Convicted of Murdering Doctor in Her Los Feliz Home

January 27, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

LOS ANGELES – A Los Angeles Superior Court jury deliberated less than a day today before convicting a transient of murdering a Philippines-born physician during a burglary at her Los Feliz home more than four years ago.

Deputy District Attorney Steven Katz said Jammie Hendrix, 35, was convicted of one count each of first-degree murder, residential burglary and sexual penetration by a foreign object. The jury found true the special circumstances of murder during commission of a burglary and sexual assault.

Although filed as a potential death penalty case, the District Attorney's office opted not to seek the execution of Hendrix. Instead, the defendant will be sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Kathleen Kennedy-Powell, who presided over the two-week trial, scheduled sentencing for March 8.

Dr. Lourdes Unson, 63, was found dead in her Los Feliz Boulevard home in April 2001 when she failed to appear at a medical clinic. The doctor, who immigrated to the United States in 1977, worked in medical clinics in Bell Gardens and South Gate. She lived alone.

Hendrix was arrested after an intensive investigation, eventually leading to the defendant as a suspect based on physical evidence found at the crime scene. Los Angeles police detectives tracked him to Austin, Texas, where jewelry belonging to the victim was pawned the same day her body was found.

Authorities learned that Hendrix returned to Los Angeles. He was arrested in August 2001 in a downtown hotel and has remained in custody since then.

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**Attn: Assignment Editors
Re: Parolee Nathan Hall**

January 30, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

The District Attorney's office is preparing a criminal complaint to be filed tomorrow in Beverly Hills against Nathan Hall, 50, a parolee arrested in connection with the Dec. 14, 2005, murder of a contractor stabbed to death in a parking garage on Wilshire Boulevard in Beverly Hills. Hall is expected to appear for arraignment around 10 a.m. tomorrow (Tuesday, Jan. 31, 2006) in Division 1 or 2 of Beverly Hills Superior Court, 9355 Burton Way, Beverly Hills. The exact division will not be known until tomorrow morning. Contact: Sandi Gibbons, 213-974-3528.

sg

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Final Three Strikes Reform Act of 2006 Initiative 01/31/06

January 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications
[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer
[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary
(213) 974-3525

The following links provide access to the most recent version of the Three Strikes Reform Act of 2006 Initiative and accompanying articles from various newspapers.

- [Romero, Cooley Heading for Another Try on Three Strikes](#)
[The Capitol News 7/27/06 PDF](#)
- [Three Strikes' Should Account for Minor Crimes](#)
[The Mercury News 6/14/06 PDF](#)
- [Another Strike at 'Three Strikes' Law](#)
[San Francisco Chronicle Editorial 1/9/06 PDF](#)
- [Unlikely Allies Back Three-Strikes Change](#)
[Los Angeles Times 1/11/06 PDF](#)
- ['3 Strikes' Reform, Part 2](#)
[Orange County Register Editorial 1/12/06 PDF](#)
- ['Three Strikes' Changes Sought](#)
[Sacramento Bee 1/16/06 PDF](#)
- [Another Swing at Three Strikes](#)
[Los Angeles Times Op-Ed 1/18/06 PDF](#)
- [New Count for Three-Strikes Law](#)
[L.A. Weekly 1/13/06 PDF](#)
- [In a Reversal, LADA Favors Easing 3-Strikes Law](#)
[San Diego Union-Tribune 2/8/06 PDF](#)
- [LADA Believes it's Time to Change State's Three Strikes Law](#)
[Pasadena Weekly 2/15/06 PDF](#)
- [Taking On a Crisis](#)
[Sacramento Bee Editorial 2/12/06 PDF](#)
- [Three Strikes Reform in the Ballpark](#)
[San Gabriel Tribune Editorial 2/14/06 PDF](#)
- ['Three Strikes' Must be Reformed Statewide](#)
[Special to the Sacramento Bee by LADA Steve Cooley 02/26/06 PDF](#)

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Two Men Charged in Alleged Hostage Incident

January 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

COMPTON – Two men who allegedly shot at deputies during a pursuit, then took four family members hostage inside a Compton home for nearly three hours last week were charged today with 28 felony counts, the District Attorney's office announced.

Arraignment for Frank Andrew Morado, 20 (dob 8-29-85), and Erick Joele (CQ) Nunez, 21 (dob 10-22-84), is scheduled for some time after 1:30 p.m. today in Compton Superior Court, Division 12, said Deputy District Attorney Scott Goodwin, assistant head deputy of Target Crimes. They are being held on \$6 million bail each.

They are charged in case No. TA083176 with multiple counts of attempted murder on a peace officer, assault on a peace officer, kidnapping, assault with a firearm, false imprisonment of a hostage and other counts.

The incident began about 11 p.m. on Jan. 25 after deputies tried to make a traffic stop in Compton. The suspects fled and allegedly opened fired on the deputies, who fired back. No one was hurt in the exchange.

Morado and Nunez allegedly abandoned their vehicle on Cypress Street and forced their way into a home, taking four residents hostage. They later surrendered.

At the time of his arrest last week, Nunez, also known as Ector Sanchez, was wanted on an arrest warrant for the March 5, 2005 double homicide at the Santa Monica Moose Lodge. He is charged in case SA057247 with two counts of murder and one count of assault with a firearm and is awaiting arraignment.

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Man Charged with Sexual Assault in Alleged Reseda Kidnapping

January 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contacts: [Joe Scott](#), Director of Communications

[Sandi Gibbons](#), Public Information Officer

[Jane Robison](#), News Secretary

(213) 974-3525

VAN NUYS – A 40-year-old Reseda man was charged today with allegedly kidnapping a 13-year-old boy near a coin-operated laundry and sexually assaulting him, the District Attorney's office announced.

Deputy District Attorney Andrea Thompson said Rafael Manguia Magana, (dob 10-25-65), was charged with one count of kidnapping, one count of aggravated sexual assault of a child and three counts of child molestation. He is charged in case No. LA051403 and is being held on \$5.3 million bail. He is scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in Van Nuys Superior Court, Dept. 100.

Magana allegedly grabbed a 13-year-old boy who was playing with his 11-year-old friend outside a coin-operated laundry on Sunday evening in the 7600 block of Reseda Boulevard. Magana allegedly dragged the boy behind some cars and allegedly sexually assaulted him before the victim was able to escape.

Magana was tackled and detained by an adult until police arrived. If convicted, he faces up to life in prison.

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Babysitter Charged with Stealing Infant

January 31, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DOWNEY – A 22-year-old Lynwood woman was charged today with stealing a 3-1/2-month-old baby boy she had been asked to watch, the District Attorney's office announced.

Denise Elizabeth Sanchez (dob 3-21-1983) was scheduled to be arraigned this afternoon in Downey Superior Court. She was charged in case No. VA 093676 with one count of child stealing. If convicted, Sanchez could be sentenced to a maximum of four years in state prison.

Authorities said that on Jan. 27, Sanchez went with the mother and infant to a beauty shop near the Southgate home of the victim. The woman, who told authorities she had know Sanchez about five years, asked the defendant to care for the child until 8 p.m. that evening. When Sanchez failed to appear with the baby, the mother went to police.

Sanchez was arrested on Sunday. Authorities said she had been staying with the baby in a motel room in Cudahy. The infant was turned over to his mother.

Deputy District Attorney Michael Fishman of the Child Abduction Unit was assigned to prosecute Sanchez. Bail of \$40,000 was recommended.

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