

T O R R A N C E

Press Release

Police Department

Distraction Burglary Arrests

DR# 120046309

August 22, 2012

On Wednesday, August 22nd, at approximately 7:30 a.m., Torrance Police Department Detectives arrested three suspects in connection with an ongoing investigation related to a series of distraction residential burglaries committed in the City of Torrance. In these cases, elderly citizens were targeted at their residences.

From evidence located at the City of Torrance crime scenes and further investigation, Detectives identified three suspects. Arrested were Frankie Mitchell – 24 yrs, Mikie Mitchell – 19 yrs, and Erika Ephraim – 18 yrs, all residents of the City of Anaheim. The case was reviewed by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's Office and each of the arrested individuals were charged with three counts of residential burglary, one count of attempted residential burglary, with gang and elder abuse enhancements. The suspects are also implicated in several residential burglaries occurring in the greater Los Angeles and Orange County areas, where the investigation is ongoing.

During the distraction burglaries, typically two suspects would work together at a time and target elderly victims. The suspects would approach the victims at their residence and ask about buying a vehicle parked in the driveway, soliciting work on the house, or claim to be a house cleaning service. One suspect would distract the victim with conversation and the other would enter the residence, or if they were already inside the residence move to another room, and steal concealable valuables. The suspects would also frequent shopping center parking lots and approach citizens who were loading goods into their cars and distract them with conversation while targeting purses and other concealable valuables. Due to the elderly being targeted, the Torrance Police Department allocated a team of detectives to investigate this case, which led to the identification and arrest of these three suspects.

This crime is being investigated under the command and direction of Captain Bernard Anderson of the Special Operations Bureau. Anyone with information or feels they may have been a victim of a similar crime are encouraged to contact their local law enforcement agency or the Torrance Police Department Detective Division at (310) 618-5570.

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TORRANCE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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