



Ukiah Police Department

Safety, Professionalism, Community Service

Chris Dewey
Chief of Police

PRESS RELEASE

On March 21st at about 9:20 PM Ukiah Police responded to a residential burglary in the 500 block of Oak Park Road. Officers learned the home's occupant had returned to find portions of the house had been ransacked, and that numerous items had been removed from the residence. Officers investigating the scene found evidence to indicate the suspect had tried to enter the residence through several windows, and was eventually able to get in through either an unlocked door or by locating a hidden key. The suspect had moved several household items to different locations within the house. The suspect had stolen various jewelry, some electronic equipment, some clothing, credit cards, cash and coins, and various other items valued at several thousand dollars before leaving the residence. Several days later the homeowner provided officers a photo of a male that had been located near the front door of the residence, and was believed to have been left by the suspect. Also during this time one of the victim's credit cards was located on the ground on South Dora Street. With the credit card was an identification card for 27 year old Ilijah Roy Nelson, of Ukiah. The photo found at the residence was also of Nelson.

On March 31st at about 5:45 PM Ukiah Police responded to a residential burglary in the 400 block of Luce Avenue. Officers learned the home's occupant had returned to find an exterior door open, and found portions of the interior of the house had been ransacked and items removed from the residence. Officers determined the suspect likely entered through a window, and that various household items had been moved to different locations within the residence. The suspect had stolen a television and other electronics, and various jewelry, valued at thousands of dollars. Officers initially contacted a witness near-by, and later several others who provided a description of a suspect seen approaching several houses in the area at the time of the burglary.

On April 8th the victim of the March 31st burglary was re-contacted by the investigating officer, who had determined 3 subjects had "pawned" a portion of the jewelry stolen from the residence. Two of the subjects were identified as 33 year old Ignacio Lara and 47 year old Florinda Garcia. Lara was found to be on probation and also to have a warrant for his arrest.

An off-duty Ukiah Police Officer was called in to investigate this case further, and was in the 200 block of Observatory Avenue attempting to locate Lara's residence. The officer noticed Nelson, who was on probation, walking in the area and carrying several items, and the officer contacted him. Nelson was wearing assorted jewelry, some of which did not fit him and some which was obviously women's



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jewelry. Some of the jewelry matched the description of the items taken during the March 31st jewelry and Nelson was taken into custody on suspicion of possessing stolen property. Nelson possessed a pipe used to smoke methamphetamine. A further search of the items Nelson had with him revealed credit cards and paperwork bearing the names of the victims of both burglaries. Additional stolen jewelry and other stolen items were located in Nelson's possession. Numerous witnesses from Luce Street were contacted and were able to identify Nelson as the subject seen in the area on the day of the burglary, as well as at least one day prior as well. Nelson provided an explanation regarding how he came to possess the assortment of stolen property, but his statement was largely ramblings and bizarre and illogical. Nelson was charged with possessing stolen property, possessing drug paraphernalia, violating probation, and 2 counts of burglary.

Officers then proceeded to Nelson's residence on Betty Street to search for additional stolen property. Officers located additional stolen jewelry, the stolen television, silverware determined to have been stolen from the first burglary, other assorted items from both locations, and additional paperwork in the names of both victims. While talking with the victims and having them identify the recovered property, one of the victims mentioned and described a shirt that had been discovered stolen during the burglary, which the officer remembered was being worn by Nelson during the initial contact with him on Observatory Avenue.

On April 9th officers returned to the 200 block of Observatory Avenue and contacted Lara and Garcia. Both subjects stated they obtained the jewelry they had pawned from Nelson, and that they paid Nelson less than the jewelry was worth. Both subjects provided contradicting statements regarding the details of the transaction with Nelson. Evidence of the pawn transaction was located in their residence, as was additional stolen jewelry. Lara was arrested for possessing stolen property, violating probation, and the warrant, and Garcia for possessing stolen property.

The third suspect has been identified and is being sought for questioning.

Prepared by Captain Justin Wyatt



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300 Seminary Avenue | Ukiah, California 95482
Telephone: 463-6262 | Fax: (707) 462-6068 | www.ukiahpolice.com