



"Safety, Professionalism & Community Service"

Cedric Crook
Chief of Police

PRESS RELEASE: UPD CASE 24-1289 and 24-1290

UPDATE TO UPD CASE #24-1284

Date: 06/25/2024

Location: 115 North Orchard Avenue, Ukiah, CA

Suspect: Justin Michael Hietala
41-year-old-male from Ukiah

Victim(s): 39-year-old-female from Ukiah
State of California

Violation(s): 664/215(a) PC – Attempted Carjacking (**Felony**) associated with UPD case #24-1289
245(a)(1) PC – Assault with a Deadly Weapon (**Felony**) associated with UPD case #24-1289
290.011 PC – Transient fails to register as a Sex Offender (**Felony**) associated with UPD case #24-1290

On the morning of 06/25/2024, Ukiah Police Department (UPD) Officers received a phone call from a 39-year-old female from Ukiah wanting to report being a victim of a knife brandishing that occurred on 06/24/2024 at approximately 9:30am at 115 North Orchard Avenue in Ukiah.

The victim, stated she went to McDonalds for breakfast with her two children and parked her vehicle in the parking lot when she was approached by a male subject who brandished a knife he retrieved from his waistband. The victim stated the male was screaming obscenities at her and reached inside her halfway open driver side window with the knife and tried to take her keys out of the ignition. Fearing for her children's and her own safety, she fought with the male subject to get him out of her vehicle. During the struggle the victim was able to roll the window up on the subjects' arms at which time the subject stopped the attack. The victim drove to the parking lot at 550 North Orchard Avenue and parked her vehicle. The male subject watched the victim drive away to the parking lot and he ran to the victim's location and attempted to gain entry to the vehicle again without success. The victim drove away to a safe location.

During the investigation of the incident with assistance from the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office Investigative Bureau, UPD Officers were able to identify the subject from the incident as Justin Hietala via video surveillance. The victim was presented with a photo lineup and she identified Hietala as the subject who

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



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attacked her. The victim later went to a local hospital where she received medical attention for her non-life-threatening injuries she sustained during the attack by Hietala (UPD case #24-1289).

The UPD Detective Bureau also assisted in the Hietala investigation and a UPD Detective learned through the California Sex and Arson Registry (CSAR) system that Hietala was required to register as a sex offender, per 290 of the California Penal Code. Hietala failed to register as a sex offender recently when he was released from incarceration on 06/04/2024 as a result of a prior conviction for violation of 243.4(e)(1)PC-Sexual battery against someone's will that occurred on 11/23/2021. Due to the fact Hietala failed to register as a sex offender once he was released from custody, the UPD Detective charged Hietala with a Felony violation of 290.011PC-Transient fails to register as a Sex Offender (UPD case #24-1290).

Due to Hietala's prior criminal history, the severity of the crimes he committed on 06/24/2024, and in the interest of the Public's safety; a UPD Officer contacted a Mendocino County Superior Court Judge and requested a bail enhancement on Hietala. The Mendocino County Superior Court Judge granted the UPD Officer request with an additional \$1-Million Dollar bail enhancement and that paperwork was provided to the Mendocino County Jail. Hietala was additionally charged/booked with the following crimes listed above.

The Ukiah Police Department would like to thank the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office Investigative Bureau for their assistance with this investigation.

As always, our mission at UPD is to make Ukiah as safe a place as possible. If you would like to know more about crime in your neighborhood, you can sign up for telephone, cell phone, and email notifications by clicking the Nixle button on our website; www.ukiahpolice.com

Prepared by: Lieutenant J. Chapman #L8