



*Bonnie M. Dumanis*



# *On the Record*

San Diego County District Attorney

March 2005

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San Diego  
District Attorney

(619) 531 - 4040

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District Attorney Bonnie M. Dumanis and the U.S. Postal Inspection Service announced last month that the largest identity theft ring in the county has been disbanded. The bust came after a two-year investigation by U.S. Postal Inspectors and the DA's multi-agency Computer and Technology Crimes High-Tech Response Team (CATCH). The defendants stole mail from homes in North County and "washed" the checks they retrieved before cashing them in to fuel their lavish lifestyles. "This is one of the largest identity theft rings ever to be prosecuted in the State of California," DA Dumanis said "This was a sophisticated crime ring that involved account holders, recruiters, lieutenants and top bosses."

Thirty-four defendants, between the ages of 18-22, were indicted on 66 felony charges including conspiracy, forgery and grand theft. During early morning raids, twenty-five defendants were

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taken into custody in Chula Vista, Otay Mesa, National City, Poway and San Diego. The nine that still remain at large are thought to have fled the state or country.

Deputy Attorney General Tawnya Boulan will prosecute the case through a special arrangement with the CATCH Team. "The Attorney General is committed to the criminal prosecution of those who would dare to profit by stealing personal identities," said Mark Geiger, Senior Assistant Attorney General with the Special Crimes Unit. "The Attorney General is quite pleased with the results," said Gieger.

The mail was stolen from North County homes in the Rancho Penasquitos, Poway and Scripps Ranch areas. The suspects targeted outgoing mail containing personal checks.

If you think you are a victim of identity theft, please call C.A.T.C.H. Hotline (619) 531-3660

## DA DUMANIS AWARDS SDPD CADETS



San Diego District Attorney Bonnie Dumanis recently recognized teenagers with well-deserved Certificates of Recognition for their work with San Diego Police and the Alcohol Beverage Control agency in combating underage drinking. "These teens are setting the example by helping us enforce the laws," said DA Dumanis. The teens are part of the SDPD's cadet program and work with ABC agents doing "shoulder taps" throughout the county. This enforcement effort is designed to catch those who would buy or sell alcohol to minors.



District Attorney Bonnie M. Dumanis presenting SDPD Cadet Abdikarim Warsame with a Certificate of Recognition.

If you know of a youth organization that deserves to be recognized for their contribution to law enforcement/public safety please contact our Community Relations Office at (619) 531-3790.

## LAW ENFORCEMENT PARTNERING

### ARCO OPERATOR TO PAY \$1.3 MILLION

Working with the Office of the City Attorney, the County of San Diego, District Attorney Bonnie M. Dumanis announced the payment of \$1 million in penalties and costs by the operator of ARCO gas stations in San Diego County for missing a negotiated deadline to upgrade equipment. BP West Coast LLC, which operates or franchises 83 ARCO stations in our county, has also agreed to spend another \$300,000 on training and oversight. "If a company enters into a civil settlement with the County and fails to uphold its end of the bargain, we will hold it accountable," DA Dumanis said. "Our Economic Crimes Division will not tolerate resistance."

### SAN MARCOS TOWN HALL MEETING

More than 150 people turned out in San Marcos for a public-safety town hall meeting last month. The forum was put on by the Office of the District Attorney's Community Relation Office, the Sheriff's Department and the City of San Marcos. Also in attendance were San Marcos Council members and San Marcos Fire Chief Larry Webb. The panel was moderated by Palomar College President Robert Degan.

## DA's Case Files

*In the past couple of months, we have had some very good results in the courtroom. The following is just a snapshot of some of our more serious cases and the final results:*

**Arturo Valdez Aguilar,** 21, was sentenced to 27 years in state prison for his part in the cold-blooded killing of 46-year-old Antonio Pagayon at the Bay Terraces apartment complex. The newspaper deliveryman had worked for the San Diego Union-Tribune for nine years. Aguilar admitted aiding his friend, Marcos Mendiola, who was convicted of first-degree murder for firing the shot that took Pagayon's life. A resident of the Meadowbrook apartments - where Mendiola lived - heard a commotion about 5:30 a.m. Moments later, the resident heard a man yell, "No, no, no!" and then a single gunshot.



**Roberto Hernandez,** 23, who also is known as Roberto Hermosillo, has been sentenced to three years in prison for groping teenage girls and at least one woman in the Vista area. The defendant had already pleaded guilty to committing a lewd act on a child and two counts of sexual battery. Hernandez was accused of a series of attacks, which began last Sept. 5 when he fondled a 45-year-old woman walking her dog on Vista Way, according to testimony at his preliminary hearing in November. Six teens also testified against Hernandez during that same hearing.

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## DA's Case Files

**Mia Kelly,**

31, of San Diego, pleaded guilty to attempted murder and use of a firearm and admitted causing great bodily injury to the victims. Kelly shot her estranged husband and another woman she perceived to be a romantic rival. Under a plea agreement, the 31-year-old defendant will be sentenced to 15 years when she is sentenced in June.

**Sancho Panza,**

28, of San Diego was sentenced to 16 years in prison for leading authorities on a high-speed freeway chase through the South Bay. He finally was caught after being caught on the roof of a stranger's home. The defendant led officers on a chase on interstates 5, 15 and 805, and state routes 54 and 94.