



Milpitas Police Department

Dennis Graham
Chief of Police

PRESS RELEASE

CATALYTIC CONVERTER THEFT SUSPECTS ARRESTED

Date: November 3, 2011, Thursday, 12:13 A.M.
Location: 500 (B) Roswell Dr., Milpitas CA
Case: 11-307-001
Suspect #1: Mario Lagudas, 42 year old male, Stockton, CA resident
Suspect #2: Phornxay Ratsavongsy, 30 year old male, Stockton, CA resident
Suspect #3: Russhia Lee Pittman, 29 year old female, Stockton, CA resident
Vehicle: 1999 Pontiac, Grand Am, red, 4 door

Details:

On 11/3/11, at approximately 12:13 A.M., a resident called the Milpitas Police when he arrived at his home, in the 500 block of Roswell Drive, and saw a male suspect lying underneath his vehicle on his driveway. The suspect saw the resident and immediately fled the area. An officer arrived at the scene inspected the vehicle on the driveway and noticed the catalytic converter was in the process of being cut out from the undercarriage of the vehicle. One metal pipe had been completely cut and the other end was in the process of being cut when the resident interrupted the suspect. Milpitas Police officers saturated the area and an alert officer saw a suspicious vehicle parked in the area occupied by three subjects. Upon further investigation, the front passenger was in possession of several tools and a pipe cutter that was located on the passenger seat of the vehicle. The driver of the vehicle was on parole. The rear passenger was in possession of drug paraphernalia and had an outstanding warrant for her arrest. Catalytic converters are often targeted by thieves for its recyclable value. A search revealed other copper recyclables in the trunk of the vehicle.

All three occupants of the vehicle were taken into custody and booked for multiple offenses including conspiracy, attempted grand theft, possession of drug paraphernalia, false information to a police officer, burglary tools, under the influence of a controlled substance and warrants.

Residents should be aware that thieves target vehicles to steal catalytic converters for the value of recycling the precious metals within the catalytic converter. Please report any suspicious activity immediately to the Milpitas Police Department. If possible, secure your vehicle in the garage or in a well-lit area.

Anyone witnessing this incident or that has information regarding this incident or other criminal activity occurring in this jurisdiction is encouraged to call the Milpitas Police Department at (408) 586-2400. Information can be given anonymously by calling (408) 586-2500, or via the Milpitas Police Department website at:

http://www.ci.milpitas.ca.gov/government/police/crime_tip.asp



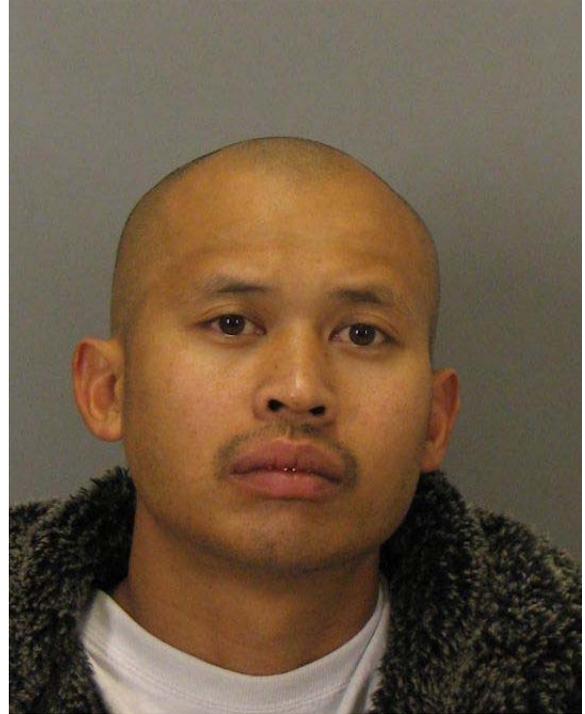
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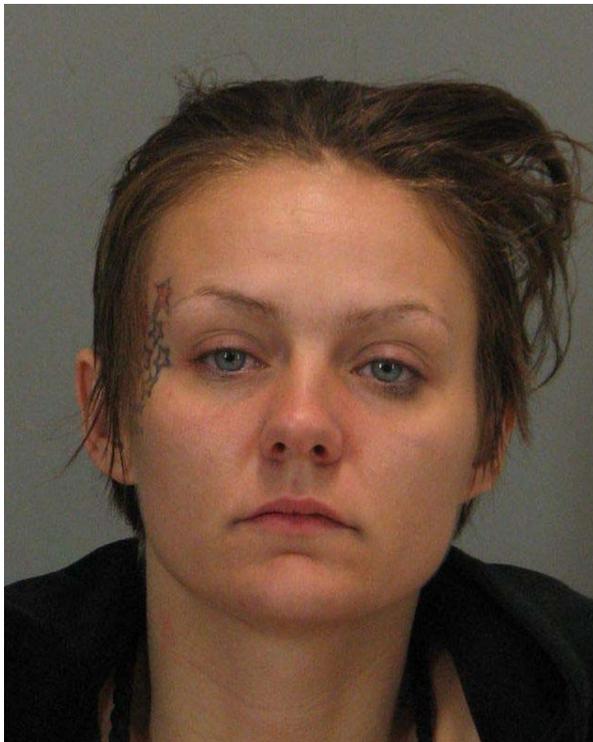
By: Lieutenant Daryl Sequeira 3189
Date: November 3, 2011, 6:00 A.M.



Suspect 1: Mario Lagudas



Suspect 2: Phornxay Ratsavongsy



Suspect 3: Russhia Lee Pittman