

# Woodlake Neighborhood Watch Newsletter

## PIER 36 TROUBLES ON-GOING; DEADLINE SET

The U. S. Army Corps of Engineers announced that a motion for a temporary restraining order brought against it by Holiday Marina's Inc. was denied.

The court found that there was no substantial likelihood of success on the merits for the claims made by Holiday Marinas, Inc. The Court also rejected arguments that USACE could not close the marina, and directed Holiday Marinas, Inc. to provide necessary safety certifications to USACE before the marina can be reopened.

These court rulings allow USACE to proceed with its competitive lease of a commercial concession.

The Corps will not impound vessels that remain at the Marina and are not in violation of life, health or safety standards before Nov. 30, 2015.

**BELL COUNTY SHERIFF TIP LINE: WANTED AS OF OCTOBER 1<sup>st</sup>, 2015 -**  
[http://71.6.170.26/revize/bellcounty/departments/cscd/adult\\_probation/most\\_wanted.php](http://71.6.170.26/revize/bellcounty/departments/cscd/adult_probation/most_wanted.php), and/or;  
<http://bellcountycrimestoppers.com>



Jakkeen Turner is a 6', 175 lbs, B/M with BRO Eyes and BLK hair and is 27 years old.

Turner, Wanted For: Burglary of Habitation. His last know address was Killeen.

**FROM AUSTIN:** The Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS) has added Donald Robertson II, 43, to the 10 Most Wanted Fugitives list, and a cash reward up to \$5,000 is being offered for information leading to his capture.



Details:

- AKA: "DJ"
- Wanted For: Aggravated Sexual Assault of a Child and Indecency with a Child
- Ht. 6' 1", Wt. 160 lbs.
- SMT: Fist holding a lightning bolt on left arm.
- Ties to Lamar County, the Dallas area and Washington state.
- Wanted since 2011 for allegedly sexually assaulting two children in Lamar County

For more information or updates in the event of his arrest, see his wanted bulletin at:  
<http://www.txdps.state.tx.us/Texas10MostWanted/fugitiveDetails.aspx?id=306>.

## ELDERLY COPPERAS COVE WOMAN VICTIM OF EXPLOITATION

Copperas Cove police have arrested a man they believe financially exploited a 77-year-old woman.

David Mitchell, the boyfriend of the elderly woman's cleaning lady has been arrested after police say the suspect made a total of eight unauthorized ATM withdrawals from the victim's account.

Mitchell who worked for the victim at the time claims he withdrew the money for the victim and gave her the money. However, the elderly woman told police she never received the money. Mitchell was charged with exploitation of elderly or disabled persons.

According to the Consumer Law Center, Inc. (CLC), Americans lose an estimated \$40 billion each year to the fraudulent sale of goods and services over the telephone. The elderly are frequent targets of telemarketing frauds and sweepstakes scams. Studies conducted by CLC reveal that fraudulent telemarketers direct anywhere from 56% to nearly 80% of their calls at older customers. One sweepstakes-related scam reportedly bilked seniors in 24 states out of an estimated \$5 billion.

The National Crime Prevention Council is working to evaluate a strategic approach to prevent telemarketing fraud and related crimes against seniors by promoting awareness and action on preventive strategies by senior consumers, law enforcement, and other

**JUST HOW PERVERSIVE ARE CRIMES AGAINST THE ELDERLY?**

community resources.

Financial crimes against the elderly fall under two general categories and often overlap in terms of target selection: fraud committed by strangers, and financial exploitation by relatives and caregivers.

Frauds such as "Prizes and Sweepstakes" generally involve informing the victim they could win, or have already won, a "valuable" prize or a lot of money they can only receive after they've sent money to cover taxes, shipping, or processing fees. The prize may never be delivered or, if so, is usually costume jewelry or cheap electronic equipment worth less than the money paid to retrieve it.

Because many seniors live on fixed incomes, they often want to increase the value of their

estate and ensure they have sufficient funds to meet basic needs. In "Investment Scams", offenders persuade the elderly to invest in precious gems, real estate, annuities, or stocks and bonds by promising unrealistically high rates of return. The investments often consist of fake gemstones, uninhabitable property, or shares in a nonexistent or unprofitable company.

Playing on some seniors' desire to help others, offenders solicit donations to nonexistent "Charities or Contributions" to religious organizations, often using sweepstakes or raffles to do so.

Offenders may recommend an array of fraudulent "Emergency Home or Auto Repairs", often requiring an advance deposit. They may subsequently fail to do any work at all, start but not finish the work, or do substandard work that requires correction. Common frauds include roof repairs, driveway resurfacing, waterproofing, and pest control. The offenders are often transient, moving among neighborhoods, cities, and even states. Dishonest auto mechanics may falsely inform customers that certain repairs are needed, or they may bill for services or repairs that were not requested or were not completed.

A scammer may gain entry to the victim's home by posing as a utility worker and distracts the victim while an accomplice burglarizes the home.

Seniors may experience cash flow shortages in the face of needed medical care or home repairs. Predatory lenders may provide "Loans or Mortgages" with exorbitant interest rates, hidden fees, and repayment schedules far exceeding the elderly's means, often at the risk of their home, which has been used as collateral.

Many seniors are concerned about having the funds to pay for needed medical care or a proper burial, or to bequeath to loved ones upon death. Unscrupulous salespeople take advantage of these concerns by selling the elderly "Health, Funeral, and Life Insurance" policies that duplicate existing coverage, do not provide the coverage promised, or are altogether bogus.

The elderly often have health problems that require treatment. Preying on this vulnerability, offenders market a number of ineffective "Health Remedies", promising "miracle cures." Unfortunately, given this false hope, many seniors delay needed treatment, and their health deteriorates further.

Compared with younger adults, seniors often have more leisure time and are attracted to low-cost "Travel Packages". However, many of these

*The publication of this newsletter is unofficial and does not express any opinion, directive, or policy of the Woodlake Property Owners Association members or Board of Directors. The primary purpose of the newsletter is to convey information designed to assist us to reduce or prevent crime in our community. The information presented is available through various public access sources, personal interview, or observation. Your comments as to how we can improve this effort are welcome.*

# Woodlake Neighborhood Watch Newsletter

packages cost far more than market rates, provide substandard accommodations, or do not provide the promised services.

“Confidence Game” frauds generally do not involve a product or service; instead, they include a broad array of deceitful scenarios to get cash from the elderly. The offender may pretend to be in a position of authority (e.g., a bank examiner), or otherwise trustworthy, concocting a story to get the victim to hand over cash, then disappearing.

In addition to variations in the type of product or service offered, frauds vary widely in the means used to commit them: *Telemarketing, Mail and Face-to-face contact.*

Unlike strangers, relatives and caregivers often have a position of trust and an ongoing relationship with the elderly. Financial exploitation occurs when the offender steals, withholds, or otherwise misuses their elderly victims' money, property, or valuables for personal advantage or profit, to the disadvantage of the elder such as: taking the elder's money, property, or valuables; borrowing money (sometimes repeatedly) and not paying it back; denying services or medical care to conserve funds; giving away or selling the elder's possessions without permission; signing or cashing pension or social security checks without permission; misusing ATM or credit cards, or using them without permission; doling out the elder's money to family or friends; and forcing the elder to part with resources or to sign over property.

The tactics offenders use include deceit, coercion, intimidation, emotional abuse, or empty promises of lifelong care. Further, they usually try to isolate the victim from friends, family, and other concerned parties. By doing so, they prevent others from asking about the elder's well-being or relationship with the offender, prevent the elder from consulting with others on important financial decisions, and, perhaps most tragically, give the elder the impression that no one else cares about him or her.

Financial crimes against the elderly share some characteristics with other crimes. Related problems requiring separate analysis and responses include: identity theft, Internet fraud, check and credit card fraud, and prescription fraud.

Financial exploitation of the elderly may also occur in concert with other types of elder abuse, including: physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, and neglect.

The usefulness of national statistical studies in determining the scope of your local problem is rather limited. However, crime prevention efforts have identified a number of warning signs and indicators of both consumer fraud and financial exploitation of the elderly. The means of committing the two types of crime vary and the list is voluminous to publish but you can find out more at: <http://www.ncpc.org/topics/by-audience/seniors>

## CRIME PREVENTION – KEY TO PERSONAL SAFETY, PROPERTY PROTECTION

It is well known that in every community, there are areas of the city where certain categories of crime occur more frequently than in other parts of town.

Indeed, there are neighborhoods where some categories of crime occur with regularity, which seldom or never occur in other areas.

Even within troubled neighborhoods, some specific areas stand out. These are known as “hot spots.”

City officials, particularly those associated with policing the population, are well aware of geographical crime statistics within their jurisdiction and address each of these in a specific manner.

These practices are known as area-specific crime prevention strategies. For example, areas prone to residential burglaries may be assigned extra personnel, including Citizens on Patrol (COPS) to patrol neighborhoods at frequent and random intervals.

High vehicular traffic locations may be assigned additional traffic control units.

Known drug and alcohol abuse locations may be assigned additional marked and unmarked vehicles and officers.

National studies – including a 2005 Harvard University metastudy published in the Journal of Experimental Criminology, titled “Hot Spots Policing and Crime Prevention,” which studied the effects of increased policing in troubled areas – noted a reduction in criminal activity where that strategy was employed.

But who needs a national study when it is apparent that marked police vehicles in any given area, causes those with unscrupulous intentions to go elsewhere?

Increased police activity equals decreased criminal activity.

Residents need not rely entirely on their government for protection of persons and property.

Instead, adopt a cooperative approach to crime prevention by becoming a partner with the police department. It goes without saying, the police cannot be everywhere at the same time.

Become the eyes and ears of the police in their absence by being observant to the activities within your neighborhood.

It is OK to be a nosy neighbor when the goal is protection of your neighbor's welfare and property. Report unusual or strange activities to police.

As I've repeatedly said, the police would rather respond to a report of suspicious activity when it prevents a crime, than to investigate the crime reactively.

Get involved in the annual National Night Out activities of your city. Get to know your neighbors on a more personal level and cooperate together to watch out for one another.

The result will be an increased sense of peace of mind.

You may even make valuable new friends.

(Source: John Vander Werff)