



City of Arts & Innovation

PRESS RELEASE

Police Department
SERGIO G. DIAZ
Chief of Police

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: June 21, 2014

Contact: Lieutenant Graham
(951) 826 – 5149
vgraham@riversideca.gov

STOLEN PROPERTY RECOVERED DURING STING OPERATION

RIVERSIDE, CA – On June 19, a victim reported a residential burglary in the 5600 block of Via Junipero Serra (Canyon Crest area). Later, the victim received text messages and phone calls from an unknown suspect saying he would sell the victim's property back to him. The victim contacted the police a second time on (June 20) to report the new details. NPC East Detectives and Supervision took the lead with the follow up. During the afternoon, text messages were exchanged back and forth with the suspect demanding the victim meet him in San Bernardino County. Eventually, the suspect agreed to meet police, posing as victim, in a parking lot in the 3000 block of Iowa in Riverside. Paperwork was stolen during the burglary so the suspect(s) not only had the victim's phone number but knew what type of vehicle the victim drove. Because of this, police devised a scheme where they put the victim's vehicle in a busy parking lot and put an envelope on the dashboard with a small stack of papers inside cut to look like real money. They had the victim tell the suspect he left the money in his unlocked vehicle and to just put his stolen property back in the car. At about 1830 hours, the suspect arrived with the victim's property, went into the victim's car, and just finished tearing open the envelope full of copy paper when he was arrested by the police takedown team. The victim was very appreciative of the police department's efforts in this case. The suspect arrested is Jay Merrill, a 41-year-old Yucaipa resident with an extensive criminal history. He was interviewed by NPC East Detectives and booked into RPDC for multiple felonies including extortion and possession of stolen property.

RPD report number: P14-093206

