



CITY OF EUREKA

EUREKA POLICE DEPARTMENT

604 C Street

Eureka, California 95501-0341

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NEWS RELEASE

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604 C Street

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Date: August 8, 2013

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Subject: Parolee Arrested for Assault, Kidnapping in Van

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Prepared by: Sergeant Watson

On 8/07/13, at 10:21 PM, Eureka Police Department officers were dispatched to a gas station on the 1300 block of 5th Street, Eureka on the report of a possible carjacking that had just occurred. The teenage caller reported her mother was inside a blue minivan when an unknown male subject entered the vehicle and drove it away against her will.

Upon arrival and further investigation, officers learned the 38-year-old victim went to the gas station at the request of a friend in order to recover a van he had loaned to a male named "Ron" who was refusing to return it. When the victim confronted the suspect and attempted to take it back, the male suspect suddenly drove off at a high rate of speed with her inside. The van's sudden acceleration caused its sliding side door to slam shut, shattering one of the windows.

As officers searched the city for the victim and vehicle, an attempt-to-locate bulletin was issued to law enforcement agencies countywide for the blue 1996 Mercury Villager van.

The victim had left her cell phone with her teenaged daughters who were still with officers at the gas station. At approximately 10:57 PM, the very distraught victim phoned her daughter(s) using a phone borrowed from a "good Samaritan." The victim stated she had been held and driven away by the suspect against her will to the vicinity of Henderson and C Streets. She managed to escape when the suspect braked at a dead end



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street. The victim told officers that during the drive across town, the suspect threatened to kill her and attempted to stab her with a knife. She fought back and managed to take the knife away from him. She held him off with his own knife until she escaped. The victim then walked back toward the gas station until she eventually met someone who let her use his cell phone.

Officers responded to the victim's location near Ross Park (11th/M Streets) and transported her back to the gas station.

During the course of their continuing investigation, officers positively identified the suspect as Ronald Gene Elwell, age 42 of Eureka. Elwell was on active CDC parole for grand theft and on formal probation for possession of a controlled substance. He also had a felony warrant out for his arrest (for possession of a controlled substance).

At approximately 2:10 AM, an EPD officer located the Mercury Villager in the parking lot of K-Mart at the south end of Broadway. Elwell was found sleeping inside the van and he was taken into custody at gunpoint without incident.

Elwell was arrested and transported to the Humboldt County Correctional Facility where he was booked on his warrant and on fresh charges including kidnapping, assault with a deadly weapon, criminal threats, brandishing a deadly weapon, and parole violation.



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