



NEWS RELEASE



EUREKA POLICE DEPARTMENT

604 C Street
Eureka, CA 95501
Phone: (707) 441-4060
FAX: (707) 441-4334

Date: Monday, September 18, 2017

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Subject: Carjacking Occurs Over Weekend

Contact: Suzie Owsley 441-4371 or sowsley@ci.eureka.ca.gov

On Sunday, 09/17/2017, at 6:50 p.m. officers with the Eureka Police Department stopped a suspected DUI vehicle. The vehicle yielded in the southern parking lot of the Bayshore Mall. A male passenger fled from the stopped vehicle.

The passenger fled through the mall and exited to the rear of the mall. Once behind the mall, the male brandished a firearm at a woman and stole her bicycle. He rode the bicycle through the parking lot area where he abandoned the bicycle and with gun in hand carjacked a woman of her silver Ford Focus sedan. The woman was unhurt. The vehicle was located on Monday, 9/18/2017 on the Hammond Trail in McKinleyville. It is being processed for evidence at this time.

The driver of the stopped vehicle, identified as John Anthony Vella, 44, of Eureka, was detained at gunpoint. The vehicle was searched and two loaded firearms (a 9mm semi-auto pistol and 44 magnum revolver) were located along with ammunition. Vella, who is a convicted felon and currently on parole, was arrested for multiple gun violations and a parole hold was authorized.

The outstanding suspect should be considered armed and dangerous. No attempts should be made to contact him. If you see the suspect call 911 or the Eureka Police Department at 707 441-4044.

Anyone with information on the identification of the suspect is asked to contact Det. Ron Harpham at 707 441-4305.

(See next page for suspect photos.)

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