

OCEAN SHORES POLICE DEPARTMENT

NEWS RELEASE

Chief of Police Richard W. McEachin

Date: December 30, 2003

A 31 year old Seattle man was sentenced to 30 months in federal prison, 3 years probation and over \$43,000 in restitution as a result of an identity theft investigation and arrest by the Ocean Shores Police Department in January 2003. Robert Miller was sentenced in United States District Court after reaching a plea agreement on the charge of Conspiracy to Produce False Identification Documents.

In January 22, 2003, Miller used a counterfeit Washington drivers license in the name of Timothy L. Johnson to open an account at Twin County Credit Union in Ocean Shores. Employees of the credit union thought the age of the subject as it appeared on his drivers license was different than his actual appearance. A credit check in Johnson's name triggered a response indicating a possible identity theft. The credit union contacted the Ocean Shores Police.

Investigation revealed that the drivers license presented was counterfeit. The name, birthdate and license number itself matched the real Johnson but the description, residence address and photo were of another individual. A credit union employee observed the same subject who opened the account at the Ocean Shores IGA and copied down the license number to a Chevy Suburban driven by the subject.

The vehicle license number came back registered to Timothy Johnson with the same information as was presented to the credit union. Investigators contacted the real Timothy Johnson in Arlington and found that he had been having credit problems due to someone else using his name and social security number. Johnson advised investigators that he had not purchased a Suburban nor had he opened an account in Ocean Shores.

On January 26 Officer Ryan Monogue observed the Suburban registered to Johnson and stopped the vehicle in Ocean Shores. The driver identified himself as Randy Miller. Miller's license was suspended and he was subsequently arrested for driving on a suspended license. A female in the vehicle, identified as Roxanne Kostelec, was released at the scene and the Suburban was impounded.

Sergeant Joe Brouillard questioned Miller at the Ocean Shores Police Department and Miller admitted to giving his brother's name when contacted by officers. Miller provided police with his proper name and confessed to using Johnson's identification. Miller consented to a search of his vehicle. Found inside was \$3500 in cash and additional counterfeit licenses, one in his name and one for Kostelec. The Suburban and cash were seized by the Ocean Shores Police as proceeds of a felony.

Miller consented to a search of his rental house in Ocean Shores. Located in the house were several computers, numerous counterfeit licenses and tools to make licenses and a large amount of stolen mail.

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Ocean Shores Police realized the far-reaching effects of this investigation and contacted the Secret Service and US Postal Service.

Ocean Shores Police further found that Kostelec had deposited a forged check into the Johnson account in an Aberdeen branch but was unable to draw any money from the account because of a bank hold. Miller was booked into Grays Harbor County Jail on Identity Theft charges and Kostelec fled the area.

Federal authorities continued the investigation and uncovered another 270 victims in several states. Miller was charged in United States District Court. Kostelec was arrested by Federal authorities, as was another individual who was considered the mastermind of this operation. Miller agreed to a plea agreement and forfeited all property related to this crime. The Ocean Shores Police now have in their possession a 1994 Suburban, \$3500 and two laptop computers.

Identity theft is the fastest growing crime in America. The Ocean Shores Police have provided information regarding identity theft on their website at www.osgov.com/police.