



ERIK NASARENKO
District Attorney

NEWS RELEASE

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Four Co-Defendants Charged with Felony Conspiracy to Commit Elder Fraud

VENTURA, California – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that felony elder fraud charges were filed against Katherine Mission (DOB 12/21/71), of Camarillo, Marites De Guzman (DOB 02/23/65), of Oxnard, Gerardo Maralit (DOB 06/10/53), of Oxnard, and Stephen Sawochka (DOB 07/01/63), of Camarillo. Mission is the owner of Elite Comfort Care. De Guzman is employed as a manager with the business and Maralit is employed as a caregiver.

The complaint alleges two felony counts of conspiracy to commit theft from an elder by a caretaker from June 3, 2020, through April 6 2020, and from February 23, 2021, through March 16, 2021. The complaint also alleges three felony counts of theft from an elder by a caretaker on December 1, 2020, and December 21, 2020, two felony counts of unauthorized use of personal identifying information on April 8, 2021, and from March 15, 2021, through April 8, 2021, and one misdemeanor count of petty theft on April 8, 2021.

On April 6, 2021, Adult Protective Services alerted the Oxnard Police Department of a possible elder fraud incident involving a 93-year-old victim, prompting an investigation by detectives.

On February 14, 2022, Mission, Sawochka, and Maralit appeared for arraignment in the Ventura County Superior Court. De Guzman appeared for arraignment on February 16, 2022. Mission, Sawochka, De Guzman, and Maralit entered pleas of not guilty to all charges and are currently released from custody with bail set at \$100,000. An early disposition conference is scheduled on March 30, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. in courtroom 37.

Individuals who may not have been directly victimized but witnessed such conduct are asked to contact Oxnard Police Department Detective Erica Escalante at (805) 385-7661.

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The Ventura County District Attorney's Office is the public prosecutor for the county's 850,000 residents. The office employs approximately 290 employees including attorneys, investigators, victim advocates, and professional support staff who strive to seek justice, ensure public safety, and protect the rights of crime victims.