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MOM AND DAD CHARGED WITH COMMITTING BURGLARIES
WITH KIDS IN TOW

Mother And Kids Allegedly Waited In Minivan While Dad Broke Into Residences

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown today announced that two men and woman have been charged with two burglaries, criminal possession of a weapon, endangering the welfare of a child and other charges in connection with a spree in which the woman allegedly drove the getaway minivan – with her four-year-old and five-month-old children in tow – while the infant’s father and another man allegedly broke into apartments and stole valuables.

District Attorney Brown said, “These are disturbing allegations. Burglary is a serious crime in and of itself. It is unthinkable that a mother and father would put their children in harm’s way while allegedly committing these crimes. It is even more unimaginable that they would allegedly do so with a loaded handgun in their vehicle.”

The District Attorney identified the defendants as Hugo Lantigua, 22, of 111-41 41st Avenue, in Corona, Erika Santana, 23, of 106-24 159th Street, in Flushing and Pedro Camillo, 19, of 23 Goodwin Place, in Brooklyn. The defendants are charged with first-degree burglary, second-degree burglary, second-degree criminal possession of a weapon, fourth-degree grand larceny, fourth-degree criminal possession of stolen property, possession of burglar’s tools, resisting arrest, endangering the welfare of a child, and unlawful possession of radio devices. They were arraigned last night before Queens Criminal Court Judge Toko Serita, who released Santana without bail, ordered Lantigua held on \$20,000 cash bail and set \$10,000 cash bail for Camillo. The defendants face up to 25 years in prison if convicted. The next court date was set for May 5, 2009.

District Attorney Brown said that, according to the charges, on the afternoon of April 20, 2009, at approximately 12:10 p.m., a resident of 35-35 63rd Street, in Maspeth, left his home and when he returned a short time later he observed a blue van parked in front of his house with a blonde-haired woman in the driver’s seat. She was later identified as defendant Santana. The complainant said he then observed defendant Lantigua and another, unidentified man leaving the front door of his home. It was later determined that his sister’s apartment in the house had been broken into and that \$1,500 cash, a gold chain, and a handheld electronic game were missing.

District Attorney Brown added that, it is further charged that, at approximately 1:35 p.m., on the same day, a police officer assigned to an NYPD anti-crime unit observed a Ford Windstar minivan with a blonde driver that matched the description from the earlier incident parked in front of 31-32 83rd Street, in Woodside, a two-story residence. The police officer and his supervisor then allegedly witnessed defendants Lantigua and Camillo illegally enter the residence and emerge shortly thereafter. All three defendants were subsequently stopped by the police – Santa in the van and the others on foot – and arrested. Police discovered two young girls in the van – five-month-old Brianna Lantigua, who is the daughter of defendants Lantigua and Santa, and four-year-old Genesis Jiminez, who is Santa’s daughter with an unidentified man. The children were placed in the custody of Santa’s sister and officials from the Administration for Children’s Services were notified.

The defendants were arrested by police officers assigned to the NYPD’s 108th Precinct Detective Squad and the Patrol Borough Queens North anti-crime unit.

Assistant District Attorney Andrew H. Kaufman, of the District Attorney’s Special Proceedings Bureau, is prosecuting the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorneys Anthony M. Communiello, Chief, and Oscar W. Ruiz, Deputy Chief, and the overall supervision of Executive Assistant District Attorney for Investigations Peter A. Crusco and Linda M. Cantoni, Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorney.

It should be noted that criminal charges are merely accusations and that a defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

Note to Editors: An e-version of this press release is posted on the QDA website at www.queensda.org.