



## MONTEREY POLICE DEPARTMENT

**PREPARED BY LIEUTENANT ETHAN ANDREWS**

351 Madison Street, Monterey CA 93940

(831) 646-3822

andrews@monterey.org

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### **Organized Retail Theft Arrest**

On Thursday, March 28, 2024 at 3:57 P.M., Monterey Police Officers responded to a report of an in progress organized retail theft occurring at the Sunglass Hat at 750 Cannery Row. Employees of the business reported three suspects entered the store wearing masks and stole dozens of pairs of sunglasses. The suspects then fled the store on foot and were not located. The estimated value of loss from the business was in excess of \$30,000.

MPD officers investigated the incident and obtained video surveillance of a silver Chrysler 300 sedan leaving the area at a high rate of speed and driving recklessly just after the crime was committed. A be-on-the-lookout was broadcasted and neighboring jurisdictions notified MPD a similar vehicle was captured on an Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) camera shortly after the crime. A comparison of the video surveillance from the scene with the ALPR camera revealed the cars were the same.

At 4:31 P.M., neighboring jurisdictions again notified MPD the suspect vehicle was captured traveling on General Jim Moore Boulevard by an ALPR camera. Officers from the CSU Monterey Bay Police Department and Marina Police Department located the vehicle occupied by multiple individuals and performed a traffic stop in the 3000 block of Del Monte Avenue in Marina. The vehicle yielded and the driver was detained. When officers attempted to detain the other occupants in the vehicle, one of them entered the driver's seat and fled in the vehicle. Officers pursued the vehicle to Reservation Road and Highway 1 North. During the pursuit, one of the vehicle occupants threw out a bag of sunglasses that was later recovered. The vehicle was not located and was last seen traveling at a high rate of speed on Highway 1 North.

The detained driver was identified as Shawn Morita, 22 years old of Hayward. Morita was arrested on charges of 459 PC – burglary, 182(a)(1) PC – conspiracy, and 490.4(a)(1) PC – organized retail theft. Morita was booked into the Monterey County Jail with bail set at \$20,000.

At 4:53 P.M., CHP officers responded to multi vehicle hit and run collision on Highway 1 South at State Park Drive. Officers located the suspect vehicle and determined it had rear ended another vehicle. The force of the collision caused the car in front to collide with another car in front of it. Parties in both vehicles were injured. Witnesses stated three subjects fled the suspect vehicle on foot and officers searched the area but the suspects were not located. Video surveillance photos from the Sunglass Hut of the outstanding suspects are below.



Anyone with information regarding this incident is encouraged to contact Sergeant Greg Galin (831) 646-3872, or to remain anonymous call (831) 646-3840.

CONTACT: Ethan Andrews, Lieutenant  
PHONE: 831-646-3822  
EMAIL: andrews@monterey.org

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