

**Press  
Release****The City of Palo Alto**  
Public Information Office250 Hamilton Ave  
Palo Alto, CA 94301

11/20/2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PRESS RELEASE #111808

**Subject :       Robbery Suspect Arrested****Contact :**       Agent Dan Ryan, Palo Alto Police Department   408-406-1330

**Palo Alto, CA** - Palo Alto police responded to an attempted robbery at 7:20 p.m. tonight, in the 100 block of Bryant Street. A lone woman was walking home when she was attacked from behind by the suspect, who tried to grab her purse. The woman was pushed to the ground, and she screamed for help as she fell. Witnesses saw the suspect run to a tan imported sedan, and flee the area. The robber did not obtain the victim's purse, and witnesses recorded the license plate of his car.

Approximately 25 minutes later, Menlo Park police responded to Oak Grove and Middlefield Road, on a reported strong-arm robbery. The victim there lost her purse to a black male in his thirties, described as 5'11" tall, wearing a hooded sweatshirt and running pants. He absconded with her two-tone purse. No vehicle was seen.

Police from both cities flooded the streets, and the suspect vehicle from the Palo Alto incident was spotted 85 minutes later, at 9:10 p.m. by Acting Sergeant Alex Afanasiev on West Bayshore Road, just south of University Avenue, in East Palo Alto, and detained the driver without incident. The driver, 38 year-old Palo Alto resident Jeffrey SMITH, was found to be in possession of the purse taken in the Menlo Park robbery. He was positively identified by a witness from Menlo Park, and he was arrested by Menlo Park police for that robbery. He will be booked into jail in San Mateo County.

Police credit the witness who recorded the license plate, as well as the resourceful teamwork between the two Departments, as crucial in making this breakthrough arrest.

Detectives from both Cities will continue to follow-up on this investigation in the coming days.

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