

## **Suspect held in serial holdups - Charges expected today against Detroit accused of gas station, party store robberies**

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FARMINGTON HILLS -- A police surveillance crew Thursday arrested a suspected shotgun bandit who is believed responsible for at least nine **holdups** of suburban gasoline stations and party stores over the past six months.

The unidentified 51-year-old Detroit man is expected to be charged sometime today. He is suspected of being the man police dubbed Shotgun **Serial Bandit**. The **serial** robber brandished a full-size, 12-gauge, pump shotgun **in holdups in** Farmington Hills, Commerce Township, Novi, Southfield and Oak Park since March, police said.

"He's been a busy guy and we expect he's probably responsible for other **holdups** as well," said Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer. "We are glad to get him off the street before someone was hurt."

Dwyer said officers from the South Oakland Narcotics Intelligence Consortium (SONIC) had the **suspect** under surveillance for 30 minutes when they watched him go into a 7-Eleven store at Middle Belt and Nine Mile **in** Farmington Hills at 4:10 a.m. Thursday, pull a shotgun out from under his coat and take \$163 **in** cash and cigarettes from a cashier. He was arrested without incident outside the store.

It was the second time the party store has been robbed recently **in** a similar fashion. It also was robbed about the same time on June 16, Dwyer said.

The **suspect**, who has a history of convictions including impersonating a police officer and prison sentences for armed robbery, is suspected **in the holdup** spree that started 4:35 a.m. on March 29 at a 7-Eleven store at 15 Mile and Haggerty roads **in** Commerce Township, Dwyer said.

He also is a **suspect in** these other robberies:

- \* 5:30 a.m. May 10, 7-Eleven store, 11 Mile, Oak Park.
- \* 4:19 a.m. May 15, Speedway, Pontiac Trail, Novi.
- \* 4:20 a.m. June 6, Mobil, 12 Mile, Farmington Hills.
- \* 4:12 a.m. June 16, 7-Eleven, Nine Mile, Farmington Hills
- \* 4:19 a.m. June 20, Amoco, Beck Road, Commerce Township
- \* 4:20 a.m. July 15, Speedway, 10 Mile, Southfield

\* 6:15 a.m. Aug. 10, Shell, Grand River, Farmington Hills

"It's good news they got him, but anyone who does this kind of work knows the risk and knows ways to protect themselves," said Sheri Saxton, who manages a Speedway on 14 Mile **in** Novi. "The crazy thing is most of us keep a minimum of cash around so somebody is only going to get a couple bucks and risk a big prison sentence."

The **suspect** has served prison terms for four armed robberies, Dwyer said, including a 1979 robbery **in** Allen Park, and three others **in** 1986 **in** Ann Arbor, Ypsilanti and Oak Park.

SONIC is a plainclothes crew made up of officers from Farmington Hills, West Bloomfield, Novi and the Oakland County Sheriff's Department that have made numerous arrests of mid- and upper-level drug traffickers and other criminals. The group will receive the International Narcotics Enforcement Officers Association's Special Agency Award **in** October -- for the third time.

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