



Office of the

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

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TWO MEN CHARGED WITH REAL ESTATE FRAUD

SAN BERNARDINO, Calif. – Two men accused of using fraudulent means to obtain the certificate of title to a deceased woman's home have been arraigned in San Bernardino Superior Court.

Troy Lamar Preston, 41, of San Bernardino, and Mario Emile McKinley, 31, of Riverside, have been charged with two counts of forgery, two counts of offering a false or forged instrument, theft from elder or dependent adult, first degree burglary, and identity theft.

On November 14, 2008, Velma Jean Lee's residence in San Bernardino was paid off. Three days later, Lee died. Preston and McKinley conspired to take over title for the purpose of selling it to an investor to benefit from the proceeds.

On December 22, 2008, Lee's name was forged on a Grant Deed fraudulently transferring her property over to Seaboard Inc. The public notary was positively identified as McKinley. In the meantime, Preston signed an Affidavit-Death of Joint Tenant in an effort to avoid probate. McKinley was the notary for this document as well.

Upon interviewing the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Seaboard Inc., investigators learned that the CEO knew Preston, but was unaware that his corporate identity had been stolen to transfer Lee's property over to his corporation. Preston was positively identified in two separate interviews by the decedent's son and the Seaboard Inc. CEO

Senior Investigator Maurice Landrum from the San Bernardino County District Attorney's Office, Real Estate Fraud Division, obtained a search warrant for McKinley's Riverside residence. During the course of the search, Landrum located and seized McKinley's notary journal, which placed

him inside the decedent's home. Based on McKinley's statements and the notary journal, criminal charges were filed against McKinley and Preston (who, at the time, was on formal probation and had not reported in since April of 2011).

On Monday, December 12, 2011, Investigators arrested McKinley at his residence in Riverside. On Wednesday, December 14, 2011, Investigators located Preston and arrested him in the City of San Bernardino.

Both McKinley and Preston were booked into the West Valley Detention Center, and bail was set at \$345,000. A Preliminary Hearing is scheduled for December 23, 2011 in Department 22.

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