

Statement of G. Michael Green, District Attorney of Delaware County Press Conference: 1/24/2008

I am pleased to announce the arrests of several individuals, two adults and four juveniles, for their parts in committing more than 100 thefts from motor vehicles over the last several months. Beginning in October 2007, municipal police departments in Newtown, Marple, Williston, Upper Uwchlan, North Coventry, West Whiteland and Doylestown Townships received dozens of reports from victimized citizens reporting thefts from their cars. In nearly all of the reports of theft, the modus operandi was the same: the thieves would search for unattended automobiles that were not locked. The thieves would simply open the door and steal anything of value, including i-pods, laptop computers, GPS Navigation systems, purses, wallets, credit cards, and cash. In at least 3 instances, firearms were stolen from unlocked cars.

As a result of a multi-jurisdictional investigation involving the police departments from the aforementioned townships, together with the Pennsylvania State Police and the Delaware County and Chester County District Attorney's Offices, authorities charged Thomas A. Gallagher, Jr. age 19, and Jennifer Hails, age 36, both of Pottstown, PA in separate criminal complaints for their criminal acts. On January 15, 2008, Detective John Newell of the Newtown Township Police Department charged Thomas Gallagher with several violations of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code including Theft by Unlawful Taking, Receiving Stolen Property, Corruption of Minors, Persons Not to Possess Firearms, and crimes related to providing firearms to a minor. Bail was set at \$200,000.00 Cash, and his preliminary hearing is scheduled for January 31, 2008 at 9:00 before Magisterial District Judge Hunter at 30 Media Line Road, Newtown Square, PA 19073. Yesterday afternoon, Trooper Courtney Voorhees of the Pennsylvania State Police charged Jennifer Hails with Receiving Stolen Property, Access Device Fraud, and Identity Theft, all violation of the Pennsylvania Crimes Code. Bail was set at \$10,000 and the preliminary hearing is scheduled for January 31, 2008 at 9:00 before Magisterial District Judge Deangelo at 1130 Ridge Road, Pottstown, PA 19465.

In addition, four juveniles from Newtown Square were arrested in connection with this theft ring. The juveniles range in age from 13-17.

In considering the scope of this crime spree, it is important to note that these thieves were able to victimize the members of our community because basic safety and security measures were not taken. Items of value, particularly identifying information like credit cards and licenses should never be left in unlocked and unattended vehicles.

Anyone who believes they have been victimized in this fashion is encouraged to contact their local police department to file a report or contact Detective John Newell of the Newtown Township Police Department at 610-356-0602.

###