SHERIFF LAURIE SMITH

TYPE OF INCIDENT: Arson and Embezzlement
LOCATION: 14500 Big Basin Way, Suite C, Saratoga, CA 95070
CASE NUMBER: 19-308-0083S

DETAILS:

On November 4, 2019 at approximately 0855 hours, an arson fire occurred at 14500 Big Basin Way, Suite C, in Saratoga, which is the office space for Pollack Investments. Responding firefighters found Janice Carlstrom bound and gagged inside of the office. Ms. Carlstrom, who is a San Jose resident and employee of Pollack Investments, was transported to Valley Medical Center for treatment of her injuries that included a laceration on the back of her head and a broken nose. Ms. Carlstrom said she did not know who assaulted her or started the fire.

The Sheriff’s Office began an immediate investigation, which ultimately uncovered fraudulent activity involving Ms. Carlstrom, who had stolen more than $44,000 from her employer. After further investigation, other fraudulent activity was also discovered involving Ms. Carlstrom totaling more than $580,000 involving multiple financial institutions.

The Sheriff’s Office Identification Unit also identified Ms. Carlstrom’s thumb print on a critical piece of evidence involving the arson, which was found at the crime scene. The Santa Clara County Crime Laboratory also provided forensic confirmation regarding the accelerant which was used to burn several items at the crime scene.

On November 12, 2020, Sheriff’s Office Detectives interviewed Ms. Carlstrom, who admitted to making fraudulent payments and starting the fire in an attempt to conceal evidence. She also confessed that she made up the story of being assaulted by an unknown suspect.

Sheriff’s Office Detectives have been diligently investigating this incident for over a year and have determined that this was a case of cover up rather than targeted violence. The investigation is ongoing and detectives are looking into all possibilities. On November 12, 2020, Janice Carlstrom was booked into the Santa Clara County Jail for charges of Arson, Embezzlement and Forgery.
Janice Carlstrom (74)