



**SHERIFF LAURIE SMITH**

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**For Immediate Release- Media**

**Office of the Sheriff**

55 West Younger Avenue  
San Jose, CA 95110

Sergeant Michael Low

[michael.low@shf.sccgov.org](mailto:michael.low@shf.sccgov.org)

408-808-4905

Deputy Jessica Gabaldon

[jessica.gabaldon@shf.sccgov.org](mailto:jessica.gabaldon@shf.sccgov.org)

408-808-4942

**TYPE OF INCIDENT:** Stalking and Threatening a Public Official

**LOCATION:** Gilroy, CA

**CASE NUMBER:** 20-237-0174B

**DETAILS:**

In March of 2020, Dr. Sara Cody, the Santa Clara County Public Health Officer, signed an Order directing all residents of Santa Clara County to “Shelter-in-Place” in an effort to combat COVID-19. Over time, Dr. Cody began receiving irate and profane letters, emails and phone calls. In an abundance of caution, the Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office initiated a 24-hour security detail for Dr. Cody’s safety. The security detail was comprised of Sheriff’s deputies, sergeants and detectives.

The security detail was responsible for collecting, vetting, processing and documenting any threatening correspondence sent to Dr. Cody. The Sheriff Office Identification Unit processed the letters and positively identified a fingerprint belonging to 55-year-old Alan Viarengo on one of the letters.

Over the course of several months, detectives received a steady flow of letters, which were believed to be attributed to the same anonymous author. The letters contained indicia of the “Boogaloo Movement,” which is a loosely organized American far-right wing extremist group known for their anti-government, anti-police and pro-gun beliefs. The letters continued to have profane and threatening language directed towards Dr. Cody. Detectives located and identified an additional fingerprint on a different letter that belonged to Viarengo.

During the course of the investigation, detectives confirmed Viarengo also sent a disturbing letter to the widow of Santa Cruz County Sheriff’s Office Sgt. Damon Gutzwiller, who was killed in the line of duty on June, 6, 2020. The letter contained language mocking the death of Sgt. Gutzwiller and also wishing death upon more law enforcement officers. Investigators located Viarengo’s fingerprint on the letter.

Based on the information collected, detectives set up surveillance on Viarengo. Detectives followed Viarengo and saw him drop off a letter into a mailbox at the United States Postal Service Office in Watsonville. Detectives worked with the United States Postal Service and seized the letter before it was sent out. The letter from Viarengo was addressed to Dr. Cody with similar threatening messages from the previous letters received.

**Prepared By: Sergeant Michael Low**  
**Approved By: Undersheriff Rick Sung**

**Date / Time Prepared: 9/1/2020 @1100**  
**Date / Time Approved: 9/1/2020 @1200**

After further investigation, detectives believe Viarengo sent a total of 24 letters to Dr. Cody, with the letters becoming increasingly aggressive, offensive and threatening. Detectives submitted the case to the District Attorney's Office and requested a warrant be issued for Viarengo's arrest for violations of Penal Code 646.9(a) Felony Stalking and Penal Code 71(a) Threatening a Public Official.

On 8/27/2020, detectives arrested Viarengo at his residence in Gilroy. After conducting a search of Viarengo's residence, detectives located 138 firearms, thousands of rounds of ammunition and explosive materials. Viarengo is believed to sympathize with and possibly associated to "Boogaloo" movement. Detectives ultimately arrested Viarengo for Stalking and Threatening a Public Official.

This is an active and ongoing investigation. Sheriff's detectives are working closely with the Santa Clara County Public Health Department to ensure Dr. Cody's safety. We are asking anyone that has information on this case to contact the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office at (408) 808-4500. Alternatively, you can contact the Sheriff's Office Investigative Services anonymous tip line at (408) 808-4431.



Suspect Alan Viarengo

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Ammunition



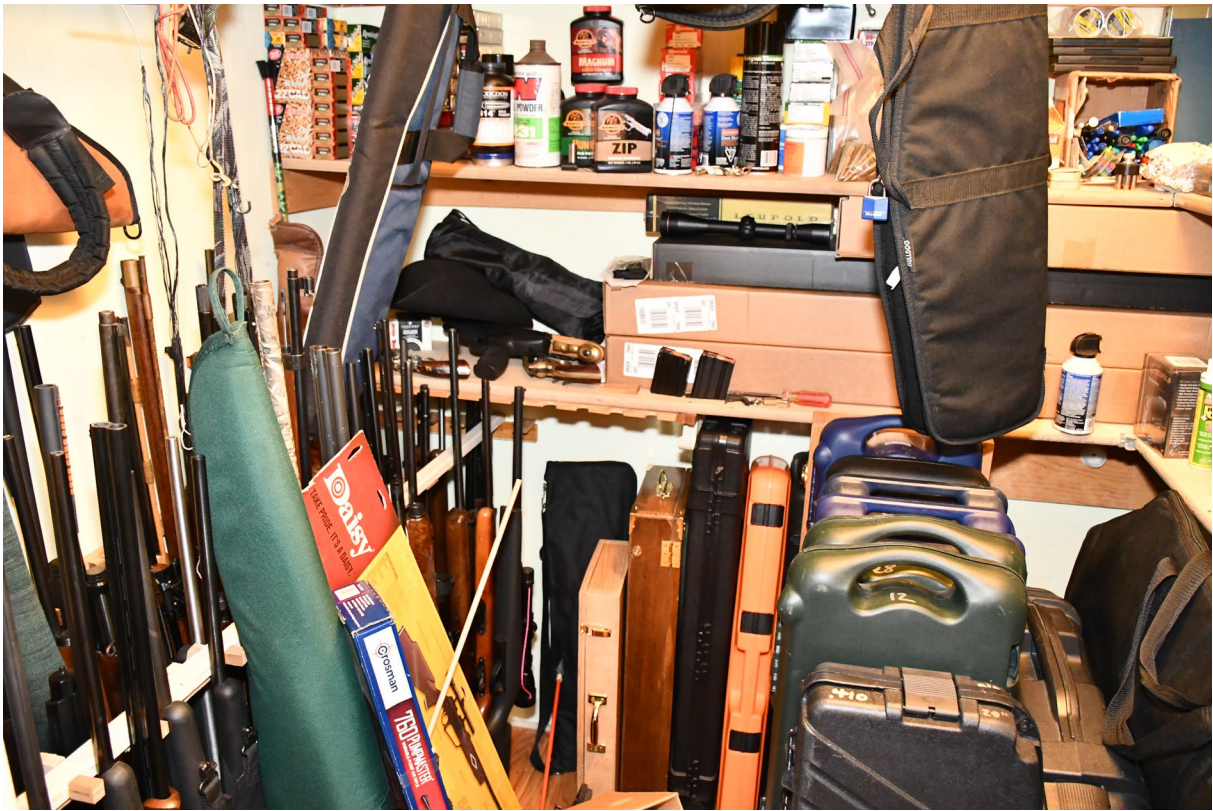
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Firearms

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