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NEWS > LAW & ORDER

Sexual assault suspect arrested in Texas

By Kevin Spradlin

Wednesday, March 21, 2007 10:01 AM CDT

The use of a stolen credit card led to the capture of a man wanted in connection with an assault on a St. Charles County real estate agent.

Mathew E. Wilson, 48, was arrested Saturday in Hood County, Texas, less than a day after making a purchase at a Granbury, Texas, Wal-Mart.

Wilson is wanted in connection with a March 4 sexual assault and robbery of a 24-year-old female real estate agent in Weldon Spring.

Wilson was visiting a home Saturday in a pricey Granbury subdivision with a female agent from Keller Williams real estate agency. Granbury is a retirement and vacation community with a population of about 6,000 people. Hood County has just less than 50,000 residents.

Wilson was arrested while he was a passenger in the agent's car, Hood County Sheriff Gene Mayo said. A transaction at a Wal-Mart on Friday night gave police a tip on Wilson's location. The U.S. Marshal's office contacted local Texas police Saturday morning and told them to be on the lookout for Wilson's 1995 blue Ford Contour, which was the same vehicle Wilson used to drive away from the attack March 4.

Mayo said it appeared Wilson had plans to continue preying on female real estate agents. Police searched Wilson's vehicle and found two handguns, knives, a stun gun, handcuffs, leg irons, duct tape, rope and "lots of lots of real estate cards."

Mayo said the business cards - which totaled more than 30 - along with several real estate magazines and relocation guides, featured blond-haired female agents.

"I candidly told him when I asked him his intentions here, 'Why would an unemployed man look at a \$500,000 house?'" Mayo said he asked Wilson after the arrest. "I'm sure that it was his plan to (attack) again."

Mayo said it was good that police caught him in the real estate agent's car and not his own.

"He told us if we caught him in his vehicle, his plan was to have police kill him," Mayo said. "I think we were lucky to catch him in the real estate agent's vehicle instead of his. It was good for everybody involved."

Mayo said the arrest served as "a big eye-opener" for the local real estate community. Less than two months ago, Mayo hosted a safety seminar for the local board of real estate agents. During the seminar, Mayo compared the need for agents to get their faces known - by advertising via business cards, magazines and billboards - to their need to maintain safety, he said.

Mayo said the Keller Williams agency didn't use all the tips presented during the class.

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On Saturday, only one agent escorted Wilson to the home. Also, Wilson was not pre-qualified and was not required to show a photo ID. His name and license plate number had been recorded.

Friday was not the first time Wilson had used the stolen credit card, according to police. Wilson had been followed as he traveled in Missouri, Tennessee and Arkansas, Mayo said.

Wilson was handed over to the U.S. Marshal's office near Fort Worth on Monday morning, Mayo said.

St. Charles County Prosecuting Attorney Jack Banas said Wilson will remain in custody of U.S. Marshals during his return trip to Missouri. He is currently being held on a federal warrant for violating terms of his parole.

Wilson was released from a Texas prison in late January.

In St. Charles County, Wilson faces charges of sexual assault, robbery, armed criminal action and felonious restraint. Banas said Wilson could be in Missouri within a few days.

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