



# SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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## San Mateo County Sheriff's Office

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# NEWS RELEASE – ARSONIST ARREST

**Incident Date and Time:** Friday, 7/6/18 – 6:51PM

**Original Incident Location:** State Route-1 at Seymour Ave., Half Moon Bay  
**Arrest Location:** 300 Block of Fletcher Ave., Atherton

**Type of Crime/Incident:** Arson – 2 Counts

**Suspect Information:** Monica Louise Berlin, Caucasian Female, 39 years old  
Resident of El Granada (San Mateo Co. Coast)

## Summary:

On Tuesday 6/26/18 at approximately 9:22 PM, a fire was reported in a field on the southwest corner of Highway 1 at Seymour Ave. in Half Moon Bay. Arriving units from the Coastside Fire Protection District and the San Mateo Co. Sheriff's Office found a large number of harvested hay bales on fire. The bales were located in a field across the street from a grove of eucalyptus trees and nearby adjacent homes. The fire was extinguished damaging approximately 900 hay bales with an estimated value of \$10,800.00.

On Tuesday 7/3/18 at approximately 9:51 PM, another fire was reported in the same field as the one on 6/26/18. Arriving units found another quickly spreading fire of a large number of hay bales. The owner of the hay estimated the amount of these bales at 765, worth approximately \$9,180.00.

Based on the investigation conducted by investigators from Cal-Fire, both incidents were determined to be deliberately set and arson. Thanks to the quick response of fire personnel, there were no injuries nor damage to any structures during either fire. The threat however, due to the weather conditions, time of night and proximity to homes was a serious concern to public safety.

A collateral investigation by Fire and Sheriff's Office investigators located witnesses and evidence to identify the arson suspect as 39 year old Monica Berlin who resides in the Coastside Town of El Granada. Efforts to locate Berlin were unsuccessful until yesterday evening, 7/6/18.

Information on Berlin's description and her vehicle had been disseminated to law enforcement in San Mateo County. At approximately 6:51 PM Friday evening 7/6/18, an alert Sheriff's Deputy was monitoring traffic in the area of lower Skyline Blvd/SR-92. The deputy saw Berlin's vehicle, a

grey 2004 Volvo station wagon driving south on Skyline Blvd and initiated a traffic stop. Berlin failed to stop and proceeded south onto Canada Rd and eventually onto southbound Interstate 280.

Units from the California Highway Patrol pursued Berlin into Redwood City on eastbound Woodside Rd, turning right onto southbound Alameda de las Pulgas. The pursuit ended with Berlin yielding to the CHP officers in the 300 block of Fletcher Dr. in the Town of Atherton. Berlin was taken into custody and turned over to Sheriff's Office Detectives. She was booked into the San Mateo County Jail for two counts of arson as well as outstanding arrest warrants from the City of San Francisco for unrelated charges.

The case will be forwarded to the San Mateo Co. District Attorney's Office for further review and prosecution.

A booking photograph of Berlin is not available at this time.

Anyone who has information on this crime is asked to contact Sheriff's Detective Gordon Currie at 650-363-4051 or via e-mail [gcurrie@smcgov.org](mailto:gcurrie@smcgov.org). You may also call the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office **Anonymous Tip Line at 1-800-547-2700**.

Release Date: 7/7/18

Case# 18-6031 & 18-6299