

Friday, Jul. 24, 2009

Man arrested after courthouse confrontation

ENTERPRISE STAFF REPORT

Eugene Forte, 57, of Los Banos was arrested Wednesday outside of the Los Baños courtroom suspected of obstructing an executive officer and resisting arrest.

According to a written statement issued by the Merced County Sheriff's Office, Forte arrived at the courthouse at about 10 a.m. and attempted to enter the building with a recording device. When told by security personnel he was not allowed to bring a recording device into the courtroom, Forte reportedly became agitated and began yelling.

The statement reported additional deputies arrived on scene and explained to Forte that he would be allowed into the building, but he could not bring the recording device into the courtroom per established California Rules of the Court. He again began yelling at the deputies saying they were not going to stop him and refused to walk through the metal detectors.

The statement reported Forte finally complied with requests to go through metal detectors and was allowed into the building, but when he was reminded by a deputy not to take the recording device into the courtroom, Forte allegedly got in front of the deputy and began yelling again.

According to the statement, the deputy told Forte he needed to move out of the way. Forte allegedly refused to do so and when the deputy attempted to walk around the man Forte allegedly put out his left arm blocking the deputy's progress and bumping into him with his chest.

According to the statement, the deputy then told Forte he was under arrest and was attempting to place handcuffs on him when Forte reportedly began pulling away.

The statement reported as the deputy was attempting to gain control of Forte, the two fell to the ground where the deputy was able handcuff Forte. The deputy received a minor injury to his elbow during the scuffle and Forte suffered a minor injury to his neck.

According to the statement, Forte was taken by paramedics to Los Banos Hospital where he was medically cleared then booked into Los Banos Jail.

Forte was released from custody after posting bail of \$17,000, a Merced County Jail spokesman said Thursday.

DUI suspect arrested

The Los Baños Police Department arrested a local man who was allegedly drunken driving early Sunday morning.

The incident unfolded shortly before 2:30 a.m. when Sgt. Ray Reyna Jr. observed a vehicle that reportedly failed to stop for a red light at the intersection of Mercey Springs Road and Pacheco Boulevard.

According to a press release, police attempted to stop the vehicle by activating patrol car lights and sirens. The driver allegedly continued traveling east on Pacheco Boulevard for a mile and a half, eventually yielding in the 2900 block of the street.

Police arrested the driver, 41-year-old Hector Castro, of Los Baños on suspicion of driving under the influence of alcohol, evading police and not possessing a valid driver's license.

A spokeswoman at the Merced County Jail said Castro was taken to Los Baños Jail following the arrest and was eventually released on his own recognizance.

- Kim Yancey