



Fresno County Sheriff's Office

Margaret Mims, Sheriff

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News Release

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Cell Phone Recovered from Canal Helps Detectives Arrest Man for Robbery and Battery

Property crimes detectives with the Fresno County Sheriff's Office have arrested 21 year old Amilcar Alfaro of Fresno. He has been booked into the Fresno County Jail and is facing felony charges of robbery, battery, elder abuse and committing a felony while on bail. His current bail is \$840,000. The District Attorney's Office has filed charges and Alfaro faces 10 years to life in prison.

On September 21, 2019, a husband and wife who are in their mid-60s, were taking a walk along a canal bank located at De Witt and E. Lane Avenues in Fresno. They noticed a group of five young adults gathered in this area. The couple took a closer look and saw one of the men was standing on a canal weir (small dam), holding a screaming child (2 – 3 years old) over the water. The man and woman yelled at the man to stop and members of the group confronted both, telling them to mind her own business. The woman then pulled out her cell phone and started taking photos of the people and their vehicles. One of the men, Amilcar Alfaro, grabbed the woman, took the phone away from her and threw it into the canal. As her husband tried to intervene, Alfaro punched him in the face. All five people and the child got into their cars and drove away. The couple immediately called the Fresno County Sheriff's Office and filed a report. A deputy responded and documented the area of the canal in which the cell phone was thrown in. A search by the Sheriff's Dive Unit was scheduled to try and retrieve it.

On October 8th, members of the Dive Unit went into the canal to look for the iPhone. About two and a half hours into the search, they recovered it. It should be noted the Fresno County Irrigation District lowered the water level and partially closed off the weir to make diving conditions safer for deputies.

The water damaged iPhone was sent to a data recovery specialist who was able to make the phone function. This allowed detectives to retrieve photos, which included images of the suspects and their vehicles. Detectives identified the suspects and contacted Amilcar Alfaro for his role in taking the phone and punching the man. On December 19th, detectives interviewed Alfaro and arrested him.

The man who was punched had to have surgery on his knee after injuring it while falling to the ground. He continues to recover from the procedure.

Anyone with information on this case is asked to contact Detective Garrett Majors at (559) 600-8711 or Crime Stoppers at (559) 498-7867, www.valleycrimestoppers.org You will remain anonymous and may be eligible for a cash reward. You may reference case # 19-12090.