

**Subject:** Dad's encounter w/Santa Ana police after driving w/o license

**From:** Mark Cao <mark.cao@gmail.com>

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**To:** Hanh Yu <hanhcaoyu@gmail.com>

Hi Hanh,

I got very lucky today and was able to follow Dad until I caught up with him. At that point, I called 911, who then dispatched Santa Ana police to talk to Dad about his driving around. I'll present the most interesting facts in chronological order.

Dad didn't know I was in town. Around 11:20 AM today (Friday, 4/21), Dad drove away from the Chipper home. He was driving by himself, since Annalise had taken her car somewhere else most of the morning. I started following him in my car.

Almost 20 minutes later, he entered the 22 freeway (at Beach)!! Very surprising to me, since I thought maybe he was going to Costco and would just take the surface streets. He appeared to drive at appropriate freeway speeds much of the time, although somewhat slow relative to other traffic, but okay.

He took the 22 freeway to the City of Orange, then things got a bit weird to me. Around 11:45 he got off the freeway and headed north. Then he took a 20 minute break and stayed in that area for a while, I assume nap time. He got going again around 12:10 and backtracking on the 22 (going back west), then got off the freeway (at around 12:20) and started heading south on Harbor (now, south of the 22 freeway). Around 12:25, I believe then he finally was headed toward the Santa Ana Superior Court (civil), where he was intending to go. He got the court parking lot around 12:40, but then got out again three minutes later. He later explained to me he thought the entry "arm" (gate) was defective, not lifting for him to let him in.

He then started driving \*very\* slowly for around 9 minutes around the parking lot north of the court parking lot (12:43 to 12:52). I should say, he basically drove around the perimeter of that parking lot, since it was a permitted lot that he couldn't get into. At one point, he seemed to take a nap for about 4 minutes. During that time as well as the later police encounter, he was parked in front of a rolling gate (so, he wasn't parked in a proper location).

I called 911 at 12:44 to report a dangerous driver who was not properly licensed. They asked how I knew that, so I replied I am the son of that driver. They asked me a few questions, like what is his name, his age, and his physical condition (I said diabetes and dementia).

It took the police around 10 minutes to arrive. Two cops showed up, each in his own SUV car. They spoke to me first, before even approaching me (I was maybe 400 feet away from Dad, but he had not seen me). I stressed to the police not to let Dad know that I initiated the dispatch.

When they headed toward Dad, I drove away, thinking my work was done. However, they called me back to the scene, the two main reasons being to ask more questions and to get someone to drive Dad home.

One of the cops recounted to me that he asked Dad what he was doing there, to which Dad responded that he had a court appearance for a restraining order against a tenant, Ken. That policeman then asked me (separately) how Dad can still run a rental business in his condition. I replied that he can't do so competently, and that has been a recurring problem.

The cop then said to me several things.

1. The call was for a "dangerous" situation, which is not what they saw or heard. Mainly, they heard only that Dad was driving very slowly.
2. They believed me that he doesn't have a valid license, but that's something to be checked.
3. Given that situation, they only appropriate thing they can do for now is to send him home, but in a safe manner. I did not want to do so (that would blow my cover), and at first I suggested that he probably could use Uber. The "probably" part was a problem, since we couldn't be sure he could use Uber to get home. Subsequently I agreed with their request to drive him home.
4. The two cops went back to Dad and explained that the dispatcher called his son (Huy), and his son was able to come right away. Then the cops called me to meet Dad, and a few minutes later, I did so. The look on Dad's face was definitely of surprise when I popped in.
5. The police said that although their immediate objective was to get Dad home safely, they seemed to imply that there would be some investigation to make sure that Dad's license was invalid and then determine what other steps should be taken.

When I talked to Dad, I told him that I had been in Santa Ana doing research for his legal matters (first, the eviction; and second, the restraining order). Regarding in particular the request for RO against Ken, I told him that my research showed he was supposed to appear on Monday (April 17th) at 8:45 AM, not attempt to appear on 4/21 around 1 PM as he did. So, the RO case was over and done with.

The cops left at that point, satisfied that father and son intended to head home.

As I was driving Dad home, I asked him if he was flustered by this police encounter. He replied, not at all, the police were very nice! I asked him if this was the first such encounter, and he said yes. He blamed the court parking lot's gate arm not lifting for causing the police to catch him!

Dad complained about Ken being the cause of so many of his problems. I took the opportunity to advise Dad that he should reconsider very seriously selling his property and retiring from being a businessman. He was mostly either silent or nodding off in reply.

Next steps: I will get the police report number and see what follow-ups will be done, if any.

Huy