



HILLSDALE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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PRESS RELEASE FOR ALL NEWS MEDIA – 8/4/2008

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER: DET. SGT. ROBERT FRANCAVIGLIA – 201.664.4200

For Immediate Release:

Chief Chip Stalter announced today the apprehension of Harold Obert, a 44-year old man from South Congers, New York. He was apprehended on July 31, 2008, for a Borough Ordinance violation by Police Officer Adam Hampton. While a Borough Ordinance charge has already been filed in this matter, this investigation is continuing.

On the afternoon of July 31, 2008, a cautious resident notified Police Headquarters that a suspicious man was going door-to-door soliciting and handing out advertisements. The resident did not believe that the man possessed a valid permit from the Borough of Hillsdale to conduct such business. As a result, Police Officer Adam Hampton was dispatched to intercept the solicitor. A short time later, Hampton located Obert on a side street and confirmed that he was handing out advertisements for a driveway paving company without a permit to do so.

With assistance from Sergeant Dan McLaughlin, Obert, who did not have any identification in his possession, was taken into custody without incident. He was transported to Police Headquarters where he was properly identified through computer records. Detective Sergeant Tom Farrell, aware of traveling gypsy crews who have been scamming Bergen County residents under the false pretense that they are a driveway paving company, examined this case for possible connections between the two. The investigation is continuing into Obert, and any of his associates, to determine if there is, indeed, a link between him and other scam artists who have struck elsewhere in the county. Obert was charged with Soliciting without a Permit, a Borough Ordinance Violation. He was released on his own recognizance, pending a future appearance in Hillsdale Municipal Court.

Chief Stalter states that defendants in every case are innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt. He would like to commend the officers involved for a professional, proficient and thorough investigation into this incident, which is continuing. Chief Stalter reminds residents that confidence schemes and scam artists often target unsuspecting homeowners. Suspicious people and unusual activity should always be reported to Police Headquarters. Residents should be apprehensive of blind soliciting, offers that are simply too good to be true, and those solicitors or repairmen making house calls without any company identification. All solicitors must obtain a valid permit issued by the Borough of Hillsdale to conduct door-to-door business.

The origin of the Hillsdale Police Department dates back to as early as 1898, when a single constable patrolled the town. The first regular police department for the borough was incorporated in 1921. Currently, the Hillsdale Police Department is under the direction of Chief Chip Stalter, with a complement of 19 police officers who range in assignment and rank. From Patrol Officers and Detectives, to School Resource and D.A.R.E Officers, the Hillsdale Police Department has an organizational focus on community-oriented policing strategies. Hillsdale Police Officers serve almost 11,000 residents and handle nearly 14,000 calls, requests or referrals from the public annually.

End of Release.

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