

Los Angeles Daily News - April 19, 2010

# Parolee held in Hermosa robbery

By Larry Altman, Staff Writer

A parolee who allegedly targets gay men through social networking sites was charged today with kidnapping and robbing a Hermosa Beach man, prosecutors said.

Angel Pena Ayala, a convicted carjacker who was identified through fingerprints left behind in his victim's apartment, was taken into custody Friday at his Los Angeles home, Hermosa Beach police Sgt. Robert Higgins said.

He tried to make an escape, but failed.

According to police, Ayala, 24, met the victim at the man's apartment on April 1. There, Ayala pulled a handgun and ordered the victim to put electronic items, including his television, computer and a camera, into the victim's car.

Ayala then ordered the victim at gunpoint to drive to a nearby automated teller machine and withdrew money, Higgins said. The victim was released in El Segundo. Ayala drove away in his car. Police later found the car abandoned in Los Angeles.

Hermosa Beach investigators identified Ayala from fingerprints inside the victim's apartment and car, Higgins said.

On Friday, detectives arrested him as he met with his parole officer at home, and found some of the Hermosa Beach victim's belongings.

"While handcuffed inside the police car, Ayala slipped (out of) his handcuffs and attempted to commandeer the police car to escape," Higgins said.

Detectives stopped him.

Ayala, who has an extensive history of violent crime, was held at the Hermosa Beach jail on a parole violation.

Hermosa Beach detectives determined that Ayala was a suspect in similar crimes in Bell Gardens and West Hollywood, Higgins said.

"There may be more people in the community that have been victimized by Ayala and the investigation is ongoing," Higgins said. "Ayala indicated that he specifically targets the gay community via social networking websites."

Ayala is scheduled to appear in Torrance court today for arraignment on eight felony counts, including kidnapping, robbery, carjacking and other crimes. He additionally was charged with a

similar crime involving another victim on March 27.

If convicted, Ayala could face 25 years to life in prison.