



RIVERSIDE COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY
NEWS RELEASE
MIKE HESTRIN, DISTRICT ATTORNEY

WEBSITE: WWW.RIVCODA.ORG

TWITTER: @RIVCODA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
SEPT. 20, 2018

CONTACT: JOHN HALL
PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICER
951.955.8662

WOMAN CONVICTED IN SCHEME INVOLVING LOSS IN EXCESS OF \$3 MILLION

The victim is the widow of a prominent Palm Springs man who died in 2007

RIVERSIDE – A Glendale woman has been convicted of multiple felonies for a scheme that resulted in a loss of more than \$3 million to the widow of a well-known, prominent Palm Springs man who died in 2007.

Marie Hozanne Vanian, DOB: 3-10-71, was convicted by a Riverside County jury on Sept. 19, 2018, after a nine-day trial. She was found guilty of elder abuse, identity theft, taking in excess of \$3.2 million, and committing an aggravated white collar crime. Vanian is scheduled to be sentenced on Sept. 28, 2018, and faces a potential maximum sentence of more than 14 years in prison. The codefendant in this case, Shavarsh “Sean” Vanian, Marie’s brother, is currently a fugitive and may be out of the county.

The victim in this case is Jo Pond, the widow of Robert Pond, a Palm Springs businessman who helped in founding the Palm Springs Air Museum and was well-known for having a famous collection of exotic cars. He passed away in 2007.

The defendants in this case were longtime friends of the Pond family through one of the Pond’s grandchildren. After Robert Pond’s death in 2007, Jo became involved in litigation regarding her husband’s trust. The investigation into the case revealed that defendant Sean Vanian told the family he had experience dealing with trusts and other financial matters and could help. The investigation shows that his experience actually consisted of selling used cars and flipping real estate. He also suggested that his sister, Marie, could become Jo’s personal assistant. Sean Vanian began to manage Jo’s finances while Marie Vanian assisted in the day-to-day operations of the household.

Marie Vanian used several of the victim’s credit cards without her consent, spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on travel, luxury shopping trips, and other personal items and expenses. She opened an additional high-end store credit card linked to Jo’s account by claiming she was Jo’s granddaughter and forged the victim’s name on a lease to rent a house for her brother in Los Angeles.

At the same time, it is alleged that Sean Vanian convinced Jo to form a corporation so he could manage and invest her money. However, without her permission, he transferred significant amounts of money from her living trust to the corporate account then made loans to friends, purchased expensive automobiles, and spent large amounts of the money on himself, even paying himself a monthly “salary” of \$10,000.

The case, RIF1603384, is being prosecuted by Deputy District Attorneys David Allen and Maureen DuMouchel of the DA’s Financial Crimes Team.

###