



Sgt. Jennifer Gilbert-Duran of the Anne Arundel Sheriff's Office helped close 14 open arrest warrants in Glen Burnie and Pasadena by tricking suspects with fake Valentine's Day gift deliveries. - Courtesy photo

'Batman' baits suspects with 'arresting bouquets'

By Carolyn Peirce
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More than a dozen Anne Arundel suspects were disheartened when their Valentine's Day gifts included a pair of handcuffs — from the county sheriff's office.

Sgt. Jennifer Gilbert-Duran, disguised in pigtails and a pink jacket, played Cupid delivering outstanding warrants to suspects who thought they were receiving a romantic delivery and instead were placed under arrest.

"The element of surprise helps in making a safe arrest," said Anne Arundel Sheriff Ron Bateman, proud of his stunt that helped close 14 open warrants.

The deputies Thursday cruised around Glen Burnie and Pasadena in a white van reading "Flowers by Ron" delivering empty flower boxes to the female suspects and gift baskets to the males. The company slogan read "With an Arresting Bouquet."

"We did confirmation calls to make sure everybody would be home to accept their gifts," Bateman said.

When Gilbert-Duran confirmed the suspect's identity, she pulled out

a clipboard for the suspect to sign — signaling the other deputies to move in and help make the arrest.

"They would look down to sign, and when they lifted their head back up, there would be three or four deputies standing there," Bateman said with a chuckle.

While the sting was actually a civilian employee's idea, Bateman is known for clever warrant operations. In October, he baited suspects with letters telling them a tax refund check for more than \$500 was waiting to be picked up.

Bateman added his personal touch to the Valentine's Day sting by slapping a "Batman" logo on the back of the van.

"During my campaign, vandals erased the 'e' in my name so the signs read 'Batman,'" he said.

"I guess that kind of stuck."

Gilbert-Duran also gave the suspects a bunch of Valentine's Day balloons with their deliveries, but in each bunch Bateman included a Batman balloon.

Bateman said that despite media attention, the stunt was still working Friday and a woman had called to say she missed her delivery.

"The lady was looking for her flowers, so she's probably being arrested as we speak," he said.

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