



STOCKING UP
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Santa Monica Daily Press

Since 2001: A news odyssey

THE BUSY WEEKEND ISSUE

Teacher accused of molesting students

BY KEVIN HERRERA
Editor in Chief

PUBLIC SAFETY FACILITY A Lincoln Middle School teacher was being held on \$1.1 million bail Sunday for allegedly sexually molesting four female students, authorities said.

Thomas Arthur Beltran, 60, was arrested on Saturday in the 6100 block of Centinela Avenue in Culver City and booked at the Santa Monica city jail for performing lewd and lascivious acts on children under the age of 14, Santa Monica Police Department's Lt. Alex Padilla said during a news conference Sunday outside the Public Safety Facility.

Investigators believe that in at least one case, the alleged molestation took place for a year.

"We are still trying to interview kids to

see when and where these incidents occurred," Padilla said.

Officers were alerted on Friday, May 2 by the parents of a 12-year-old girl who was a student of Beltran's. The girl told investigators that the abuse occurred during the school year in his classroom at Lincoln.

Beltran, who taught at the school for 20 years and has been employed by the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District for the last 30 years, specialized in teaching English as a second language. On the Lincoln Middle School Web site it lists Beltran as working in the Humanities Department.

A substitute teacher will be assigned to cover Beltran's classes while the investigation continues.

SMMUSD Superintendent Dianne Talarico said crisis counselors, both internal and external, will be made available at

Lincoln to provide support to students, their families and faculty.

The district's administrative team met with school officials and members of the PTA on Sunday afternoon to formulate a response plan, which will include an adults-only meeting with school officials and parents to discuss the situation tonight at 7 p.m. on the Lincoln campus. Talarico added that a statement would be made to students sometime during the school day, but wasn't sure of the specifics as of press time.

District and school officials have decided to proceed with plans to administer state assessment tests that were previously scheduled to take place.



BELTRAN

"I just feel awful," Talarico said. "I know these are allegations at this point, but my heart and my thoughts and prayers are with the families and the children at this time."

The district is fully cooperating with detectives, she said.

School board President Oscar del la Torre said he too is concerned about the well being of the students and the entire Lincoln Middle School family.

"This is our number one concern right now, because [Beltran] has been an employee for many years we want to see if there are any other victims," de la Torre said. "Because a lot of students (speak English as a

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COMMUNITY PROFILES STUART GARBER

Going his own way

BY MELODY HANATANI
Daily Press Staff Writer

DOWNTOWN Stuart Garber was caught in a pickle.

It was 2002 and Garber had received a call from a long-time patient, informing the practitioner of homeopathic medicine that she was no longer taking a treatment for a thyroid problem.

The Santa Monica doctor advised the patient to resume the medication, only to be told that she had no intention of doing so, bluntly asking Garber, "So what are you going to do about it?"

Garber was caught in a tricky situation, knowing it was his ethical duty as a doctor to ensure his patient's well-being, but knowing equally well that there was no way she would go back on the medicine.

"She was on it for like 25 years," Garber said in an interview last week. "Conventional medical wisdom is if you're on a drug for



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SEE CP PAGE 10 **MEDICINE MAN:** Stuart Garber looks upon a number of homeopathic remedies that he created at his practice on Second Street.




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Police believe there may be more victims

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second language), I just hope that they feel comfortable in coming forward and trusting the system."

De la Torre, who said the investigation is the district's top priority, fears that if there are other alleged victims that they will not come forward because of their parents' immigration status.

"I hope that doesn't interfere with getting to the bottom of what actually occurred," de la Torre said.

The investigation is ongoing and those with information are urged to contact the SMPD at (310) 458-8491. Anyone wishing to remain anonymous may call the SMPD tip line at (310) 458-8449 or the We Tip hotline at (800) 782-7463.



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BREAKING THE NEWS: Members of the Santa Monica Police Department announce molestation charges against local teacher Thomas Arthur Beltran during a news conference at the Public Safety Facility on Sunday. Beltran has been a teacher in the school district for the last 30 years.

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Santa Monica doctor creates line of homeopathic remedies

FROM CP PAGE 1

that long it shuts down the gland and you pretty much have to be on it for life."

He offered a deal — the patient would be the first to try a new homeopathic remedy the doctor had toyed with in his mind for some time, and in exchange, she would promise to stick to a strict regimen that included check-ups every few weeks.

The remedy — a concoction of biotherapy formulas — would eventually normalize the patient's thyroid levels after six months of use and go on to cure the various ailments of countless successive patients, their problems ranging from insomnia to skin diseases.

That one concoction would spark a chain of events and chance meetings that would land the homeopathic remedy on the shelves of Whole Foods and Wild Oats markets in Santa Monica and West Los Angeles.

Six years since Garber received that fateful call from his thyroid patient, the doctor is playing double duty, both as a homeopathic doctor and an entrepreneur, his line — "Dr. Garber's Natural Solutions" — released in Whole Foods stores nearly three weeks ago.

Natural Solutions, whose line includes 11 different remedies for diseases ranging from allergies to constipation, is based on three different biotherapies, which are natural substances used to fight illnesses.

The biotherapies include a gemmotherapy, which is the active growing agents in plants; the lithotherapy, which come from mineral rocks; and organotherapy, made from healthy tissue.

While Garber was surprised to see the results with his thyroid patient, he wasn't convinced of the formula until receiving a call from another patient who had a sleeping problem.

Garber went back to the lab and tinkered with the formula. On the first night the insomniac patient tried the sleeping treatment, she dozed off.

"I thought wow, I think I hit on something important here," Garber said.

Garber, who in 1997 became the first person in the country to receive his doctorate's degree in homeopathy, began offering the treatment to other physicians soon after.



GARBER

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Stuart Garber

His colleagues reported similar results on their own patients and it wasn't long before Garber began receiving suggestions to explore marketing opportunities.

In 2005, Garber sold his first batch to a medical distribution company. Dr. Garber's Natural Solutions hit the shelves at the Santa Monica Homeopathic Pharmacy next.

Whole Foods entered the picture when Garber met an acquaintance of the head buyer for the company's Northern California region. He sent off a batch to the buyer who enjoyed

the product, but found it an inopportune time to introduce it to stores. Garber was told thank you, but try again six months later.

So he did.

In a chance meeting, Garber ran into a friend who knew the buyer for the Southern California region for Whole Foods. The buyer coincidentally had heard of Dr. Garber's Natural Solutions and had tagged it as a possible new product for the popular stores.

More than half a year later, Natural Solutions is now available.

"At Whole Foods Market, we have stringent quality standards for all the products that we carry," Robin Rogosin, the Whole Body Buyer and associate coordinator for the Southern Pacific Region, said in a statement on Friday. "Dr. Garber's Natural Solutions are uniquely formulated ... and have been shown to be helpful among Dr. Garber's patients in his clinical practice."

While Garber is a practitioner of homeopathic medicine, his career started in 1981 as a holistic chiropractor.

Raised on Long Island, Garber moved out to the West Coast to attend the Los Angeles College of Chiropractic, receiving his master's degree in 1981.

He started working as a protégé to one of the top cranial doctors in the world whose practice was located in Los Angeles. After a few years, Garber bought the practice.

It was during his travels in Europe that Garber began meeting homeopathic doctors. He began incorporating homeopathy into his practice slowly.

After taking a sabbatical for a few years from the profession, during which time Garber earned his PhD in homeopathic medicine, he opened his practice in Downtown Santa Monica in 1998.

Garber said he hopes to see his products expand within the Whole Foods company and eventually go global.

"This way a lot more people can have access to products that really work for them, that don't have any side effects, that are easy for them to use, and that will really make an impact on the quality of their lives," he said

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