

April 2, 2009
For Immediate Release

[Watch Video](#)

Contact: [Paul Levikow](#)
(619) 531-3536

DA Charges South Bay Woman in Connection with ‘Toys For Tots’ Thefts

DA Investigators Seek Witnesses Who May Have Bought Toys

San Diego County District Attorney [Bonnie M. Dumanis](#) today announced felony charges have been filed against a South Bay foster mother and president of the Latino Foster Parents Association who stole more than 11,000 toys from the popular [Toys For Tots](#) program and sold them for personal gain over several years. Virginia Kelly, 73, of San Ysidro, was arrested and charged with grand theft and embezzlement. If convicted, she faces up to four years in prison.

“Stealing from a charity and depriving needy children in San Diego of the chance to get a new toy is despicable,” said DA Dumanis. “This criminal investigation has identified someone who brazenly took advantage of the community’s goodwill and trust for many years.”

San Diego County Health and Human Services Agency, San Diego County Child Welfare Services and the Toys for Tots program cooperated with the DA investigation. For the past several years, Kelly accepted donated toys during the holidays from the Toys for Tots program for distribution to needy families. Instead, it is suspected Kelly sold toys at garage sales for personal gain. In the past three months, investigators from the District Attorneys Office served search warrants and seized more than 11,000 toys from Kelly’s home and two other locations, including Chula Vista storage unit she rented. Kelly cared for four foster children and was the President of the Latino Foster Parent Association. Child Welfare Services has removed the foster children from Kelly’s home.

The mission of the Toys for Tots Program is to collect new, unwrapped toys each year and distribute those shiny new toys as Christmas gifts to needy children. The primary goal of Toys for Tots is to deliver a message of hope to needy youngsters that will motivate them to grow into responsible, productive citizens.

Kelly was taken into custody at her home on April 1st and is scheduled to be arraigned in Superior Court downtown at 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, April 2nd. The District Attorney’s Office is continuing its investigation into those who assisted Kelly by selling toys on her behalf. Anyone with information about Kelly’s illegal selling of toy activity, including those who sold on her behalf is asked to call (619) 531-4475.

###