



January 12, 2009

MADIGAN: THREE CHARGED WITH FRAUD AND FORGERY IN REAL ESTATE SCAM

Chicago - Attorney General Lisa Madigan announced that a Cook County grand jury has indicted three Chicago area individuals for allegedly forging documents as part of a fraudulent real estate transaction.

Warren Nickel, 59, of Tinley Park, Adrian Garner, 37, of Calumet Park, and Chiffon Mars, 38, formerly of the Chicago area, each face four counts of theft over \$100,000 and four counts of theft over \$10,000. Nickel also faces a charge of false impersonation of an attorney, and Garner faces one charge of forgery.

An Attorney General's office investigation revealed that Nickel and Garner allegedly executed a series of fraudulent documents in December 2005 as part of the sale of Jack Anderson's Chicago home following his 2004 death. Mars, who was Anderson's step-granddaughter and a beneficiary of Anderson's estate, sold Anderson's property to a third-party in December 2005, without the knowledge and consent of the Anderson estate executor or Mars' co-beneficiary. Nickel served as her attorney in the transaction, even though he was disbarred from practicing law in 2004. To complete the transaction, Nickel; forged and Mars signed documents, including an affidavit of heirship, which stated Mars was the granddaughter of the deceased, an affidavit of title and a warranty deed. At the closing, Nickel, Garner and Mars received a total of more than \$100,000.

Nickel was arraigned today by Judge Douglas A. Simpson. At a previous Jan. 8 arraignment, Judge Simpson set Garner's bond at \$100,000. Mars has a no bond arrest warrant and may have fled the State.

Nickel and Garner face additional pending charges in a separate Cook County case based on a similar scheme in which they allegedly forged documents in fraudulent real estate transactions in an effort to put an elderly victim out of her home.

Nickel is currently serving 30 months felony probation in Cook County for his previous conviction on five counts of forgery for stealing more than \$93,000 from an estate. And in 2004, the Attorney Registration and Disciplinary Commission disbarred Nickel from the practice of law. He is also serving 30 months felony probation for a second conviction on six counts of false impersonation of a lawyer.

Assistant Attorney General Neal Goodfriend is handling the case for Attorney General Madigan's Financial Crimes Bureau.

The public is reminded that these are charges and that the defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty.

-30-

[Return to January 2009 Press Releases](#)

