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Suspected Celebrity Embezzler Pleads Innocent

Man Accused Of Stealing From Burt Reynolds And Loni Anderson



LOS ANGELES, Posted 1:52 p.m. August 19, 1999

-- A man accused of embezzling money from actor [Burt Reynolds](#) pleaded innocent today to charges of forgery and grand theft.



Tarzana, Calif., resident William

Patrick Bentley, 39, also faces separate charges of defrauding the [Los Angeles Police Department's](#) v orphans fund, said a wire service.

Bentley was arrested on the charges involving Reynolds and his ex-wife, Loni Anderson, when he showed up at downtown courthouse last week for the start of his trial in the LAPD case.

He posted a \$20,000 bond in the LAPD case, in which he is accused of taking \$30,000 in fees under 1 while acting as "coordinator" for the 28th annual Police-Celebrity [Golf Tournament](#) last year.

After his arrest, a wire service said sheriff's deputies found a business card in Bentley's wallet that identified him as president and personal manager of Burt Reynolds Productions -- positions he never held.



Deputy District Attorney Michael Kraut told reporters that the cards were traced to a Tarzana post office box that was used by Bentley, who worked as a low-level assistant to Reynolds in 1995.

Bentley allegedly forged Reynolds' signature on letters and a check for \$20,000 from the Suarez Corp., which he used to make a personal appearance.

He also allegedly forged the signatures of Anderson on release letters. That apparently enabled him to collect money from the Suarez Corp.



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ing held in lieu of \$104,000 bail. Kraut has asked that the
 ve scrutinized to make sure it is not ill-gotten. According
 .
 ed of chest pains and difficulty breathing after he arrived
 d a wire service.

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