

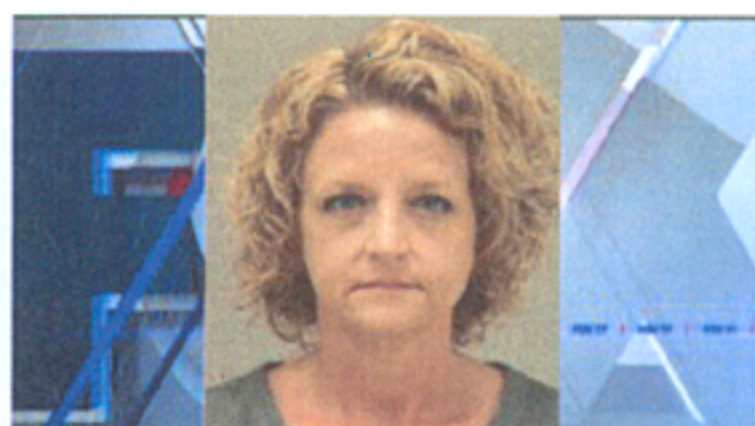
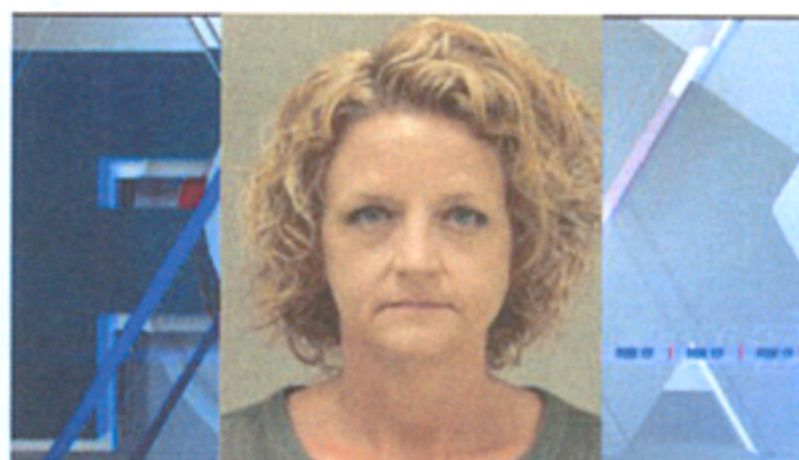


Music Booster Arrested For \$100,000+ Embezzlement

POSTED 6:35 PM, JULY 10, 2014, BY CARL GUSTIN, UPDATED AT 06:49AM, JULY 11, 2014

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — The treasurer of a school music booster club has been jailed for embezzling more than \$100,000.

The Kent County Sheriff's



Department announced the arrest Thursday of a Kenowa Hills Instrumental Music Boosters board member. The group's Web site lists its treasurer as Robyn Heintz, 40, who also was booked into the Kent County Jail on Thursday on charges

of embezzling more than \$20,000.

Heintz was released from jail on \$10,000 bond.

The sheriff's department said that on May 2 it was contacted by booster club members with a fraud complaint. They said there had been several suspicious charges and withdrawals on the club's bank account dating back several months.

Investigators reviewed financial documents and bank statements and uncovered hundreds of unauthorized charges and cash withdrawals spanning several years and totaling more than \$100,000.

Investigators said they identified the club board member with access to the account, interviewed her, she confessed to being involved in the theft and was charged with embezzlement by the Kent County Prosecutor's Office.

The incident remains under investigation by the Kent County Sheriff's Department.



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SANTA PAULA HIGH SCHOOL BAND BOOSTER CLUB MEMBER ARRESTED FOR EMBEZZLEMENT



Michael Suniga, 29, was arrested for allegedly embezzling money from the Santa Paula High School Band Booster Club.

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Wednesday, October 01, 2014

SANTA PAULA, Calif. (KABC) -- A member of the Santa Paula High School Band Booster Club was arrested for allegedly embezzling money from the organization.

Back in April, club members reported to the Santa Paula Police Department that they suspected a fellow member, 29-year-old Michael Suniga of Santa Paula, was embezzling money from their coffers. That's when authorities launched their investigation, which included interviews with victims and witnesses and multiple search warrants. A forensic audit was also conducted by the Ventura County District Attorney's Office.

Following the investigation, authorities determined that approximately \$15,000 - \$22,000 was embezzled from the booster club. Investigators said the incident sparked a grassroots movement in the community to raise money for the school band to attend a performance in San Francisco.

An arrest warrant was issued for Suniga, who surrendered to police. He was arrested for embezzlement and transported to Ventura County Jail. Bail was set at \$50,000.

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By Pam Cross
BIO

North Reading Booster Club president arrested in embezzlement

John Norton accused of stealing more than \$10,000

UPDATED 6:47 PM EDT Oct 22, 2014

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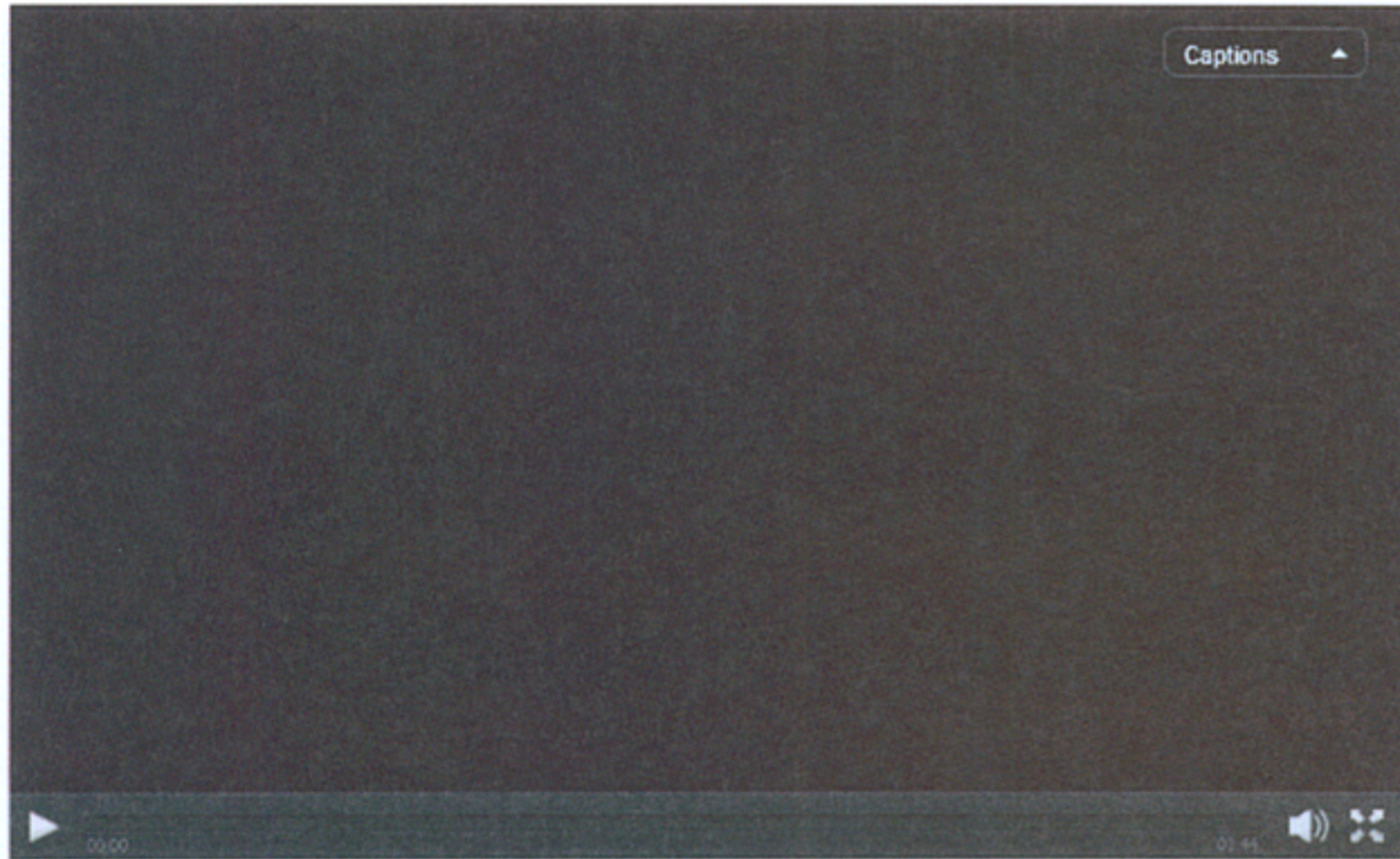
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NORTH READING, Mass. — The president of the North Reading Athletic Boosters Club is arrested and charged with stealing more than \$10,000 meant for public school athletic teams.

[Watch the report](#)

John Norton, 68 is well known in North Reading. He grew up in the area and lived there all his life. He's the president of the North Reading Athletic Boosters.

Their website said they raise money for high school sports. The group funds high school awards banquets, scholarships and athletic equipment.

North Reading police began to investigate him last May. Norton is said to be the only group member with access to the Booster's financial accounts.

Police believe he misappropriated \$10,700. The prosecutor told a judge it was withdrawn "in amounts of \$20-\$200 and many within the same day or consecutive days."

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UPDATED 11:45 PM PST Mar 05, 2014

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HOLLISTER, Calif. — A Hollister woman was arrested Monday on suspicion that she stole \$57,000 from San Benito High School's band through their booster club.

VIDEO: Hollister 'band mom' emptied boost club account police say

Debra Curtis was appointed treasure of the Baler Band Booster Club in July of 2013 and resigned in February of 2014. She was entrusted with managing the school's booster club money.

HOLLISTER 'BAND MOM' EMPTIED BOOSTER CLUB ACCOUNT,...

The San Benito County Sheriff's Office arrested 53-year-old Debra Curtis of Hollister Monday and accused her of stealing money from the Baler Band Boosters Club.

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Curtis, 53, is also a mother of two children who are students at San Benito High and are in the band.

San Benito County Sheriff's detectives said Curtis began embezzling money from the band as soon as she became treasurer.

"The booster club discovered that money they raised through fundraisers and donations had been emptied by Curtis," Lamonica said.

"Curtis was able to obtain an ATM card under the Baler Band Booster Club name and used it to make withdrawals and purchases for her own personal gain," Sheriff's Capt. Tony Lamonica said Tuesday

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Curtis came under suspicion of taking the money out of the booster account when the high school's band director attempted to cash a check from the booster club. The bank refused to cash the check because it bounced.

Detectives said Curtis took so much money that the booster club is now \$700 in debt because she over-drafted the credit card.

"This is truly a tragic event that challenges our beliefs and trust in our fellow citizens," Baler Band Booster President Anthony Ortega said.

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"Ms. Curtis had been a parent volunteer in the middle school program for two years, and handled uniform duties at the high school before being elected to the treasurer's role," Ortega said.

The Hollister high school's music program is an intricate part of the community, Ortega said.

"The band marches in all community parades, they participate in the county music festival and have successfully represented Hollister in many band competitions across Northern California. I was personally amazed at how many generations of musicians have passed through the program and still reside in Hollister. Mr. James Zuniga supports a Competition Choir, Jazz Band, Marching Band, Concert Band, Color Guard, Winter Guard and Winter Percussion," Ortega said.

As of Wednesday afternoon, Curtis was freed after posting bail.

Ortega, said Curtis was a person students worked with one-on-one. She often did their hair to help them get ready for competition.

Fundraising efforts are now day to day, Ortega said. Fireworks sales are the group's biggest moneymaker, and the club had already set up a separate account in case a drought prevents sales this year. But that money is now gone.

Before the embezzlement accusations, the club had already set up a weekly bingo night at the Elks Lodge to raise supplemental funds. Ortega said the hardest part is accepting that trust has been violated, and telling the hardworking group of students.

"That's the hardest thing, having to look at them and say, we want you to go, but we have to figure out how to get you there now," Ortega said.

The band is scheduled for a competition this weekend in Dublin, and will rely on the Boosters for money for transportation and lunch.

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Susquehanna Twp Booster Club Treasurer arrested for theft of funds

POSTED 1:12 PM, JULY 26, 2013, BY PAUL SMITH, UPDATED AT 03:32PM, JULY 26, 2013



Police say the treasurer of the Susquehanna Township Midget Football Association stole over \$60,000 from the bank accounts of three youth sports organizations. Lesley Darrin, 38, of the 4200 block of Crooked Hill Road, Harrisburg, faces three counts of felony theft by unlawful taking, after an investigation into missing funds from high school sports booster clubs.

The investigation began when police were advised of missing money from the bank account of the Susquehanna Township Midget Football Association. Darrin had been the treasurer of that organization and was suspected of taking money from the account in unauthorized transactions. Further investigation revealed that Darrin was also the treasurer for the Susquehanna Township High School Softball Booster Club and the Susquehanna Township High School Girls Basketball Booster Club. Funds were missing from those organizations as well. In total, Darrin is accused of taking in excess of \$60,000 from the three organizations. Darrin was arraigned at Dauphin County Central Booking and bail was set at \$20,000.

The booster club issued the following statement:

“Over the course of the last few weeks members of the Susquehanna Township Midget Football Association Board discovered alarming financial discrepancies and began investigating STMFA’s financial accounts.

As a result our review, our board was shocked and saddened to uncover the misappropriation of funds from our organization account that our players and their families worked tirelessly to raise.

We appreciate the work and professionalism of the Susquehanna Township Police Department during this difficult time and will continue to work closely with them throughout the course of their investigation.

The board is firmly committed to maintaining the integrity of our program and remains focused on providing a quality educational and instructional program for our youth.

We extend our sincere thanks to our sponsors, parents and players and ask for their continued support.”

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Booster club leader guilty of embezzlement

In court, Jennifer Borders-Piatti is castigated by band members and others from Costa Mesa High School.

September 19, 2013 | By Jeremiah Dobruck

Band members and boosters from Costa Mesa High School lined up in court Thursday to scold a volunteer for the "utter monstrosity" of her crime: stealing tens of thousands of dollars from their booster club's coffers.

Jennifer Borders-Piatti, the former band booster club president, pleaded guilty to embezzling more than \$50,000 from the group during 2011 and 2012.

She faced a maximum of three years in prison for a felony charge of grand theft, but as part of a plea agreement, an Orange County Superior Court judge sentenced her to a year in jail and three years of probation and ordered her to pay restitution — \$51,974.32, what she stole plus interest.

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"The impact of what has happened has been very devastating to our program," said band director Sandy Gilboe as she stood at a podium facing Borders-Piatti. "This has really been a betrayal to us. It's been a betrayal to me."

Boosters said the program has grown since Borders-Piatti's arrest last year, stretching depleted funds even further.

"We can't afford new hats, and I have 20 new kids who need hats," said Colleen Tinus, a booster and mother of a student, before the sentencing. "I'm totally disgusted with what she did."

It's unclear when Borders-Piatti will pay back the program.

Prosecutor Anne Selin said she'd hoped to have a check for boosters at Thursday's court date but that Borders-Piatti was unable to produce one.

The probation department will set up a plan to manage repayment.

"Sweat, blood and tears stained that money, but she didn't care," said Lorelee Sepsey. The Costa Mesa High School senior

called Borders-Piatti's ability to look band members in the eye now "alien to me."

"Honestly, your honor, she's only sorry she got caught," Lorelee said.

Costa Mesa police arrested Borders-Piatti, who was 50 at the time, in October after searching her house and finding evidence that linked her to the theft of funds.

At the time, law-enforcement officials said she had been making credit card purchases and ATM withdrawals from the booster's account that were unrelated to the band.

"This was no mistake, not a one-time thing," said Mariel LeValley, the new booster president.

LeValley said boosters discovered trips to Victoria's Secret and checks written to Piatti's personal business.

"Your honor, our boosters club doesn't need to go shopping at Ralphs every week or pay the Time Warner Cable bill," LeValley said.

Borders-Piatti nodded when LeValley asked her if she understood that stealing for own selfish needs crossed the line, particularly for a parent volunteer.

Throughout the boosters' and students' statements, Borders-Piatti sat about 10 feet in front of the speakers and often bit her lower lip as she looked them in the eyes.

She responded briefly to the 20 people in the audience before receiving her sentence and reporting to probation across the hall.

"I am so very sorry. I have no excuse," Borders-Piatti said, later adding that she wouldn't go into why she did what she did.

"My children and my husband have nothing to do with this," she said. "Please don't take it out on them."

Her priorities, she said, are mending her family and repaying her debt to the band.

"I do love you all," she said. "I know you find that hard to believe."

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Posted: 6:23 a.m. Friday, Feb. 8, 2013

Investigators: Booster club employee charged with embezzlement for second time



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BURKE COUNTY, N.C. — A local booster club treasurer is charged with embezzlement for the second time in six months.

Regina Wyatt will be in court on the new charges Friday.

She works with the Drexel Community Center Athletic Boosters Club in Morganton.

State investigators told the Morganton News Herald she refused to give them the organization's financial records.

She is required to do that, since the club is considered a charity.

Two weeks ago, Burke County dismissed the original embezzlement charges that Wyatt was arrested for last August.

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