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## Setting it Straight: Report of call about murder suspect was false

By Don Miller - Santa Cruz Sentinel  
Posted: 05/14/2012 10:20:12 PM PDT

The Sentinel is correcting an article that appeared last week detailing a claim from a local man who said he called 911 to report a man acting strangely in his neighborhood - a man who days later allegedly stabbed a woman to death.

The caller, Don Adams, told the Sentinel he had called law enforcement to report a man he believed to be Charles Anthony Edwards III loitering in his Broadway neighborhood. According to police, Adams told them Monday he never made that phone call.

The man's assertion that he had seen a man matching Edwards' description days before the May 7 fatal stabbing and called police was reported Wednesday in the online version of the Sentinel and the Thursday print edition, as part of our coverage of the killing of Shannon Collins. Edwards is charged in her slaying.

Police say the newspaper's report caused undue concern in the community over the perception that the department was not responding to complaints about threatening individuals.

The Sentinel tried unsuccessfully Wednesday to find out from Santa Cruz police if there was a record of any such call. The Sentinel was unable to reach police late Wednesday to verify the man's claims. Police said they wouldn't have been able to verify it before the story was published even if we had reached them.

The next day, dispatchers sifted through hundreds of calls and reported they could find no record of the purported call. They said Adams frequently called the dispatch line to report situations in his neighborhood.

The Sentinel tried to recontact Adams, by phone and with a personal visit, after dispatchers issued their statement and could not reach him until Monday to verify his initial claim.

Monday, police said they talked to Adams, who admitted he never made any such call. A Sentinel reporter also talked to Adams on Monday, and asked if he was standing by his initial claim. He replied, "I should have checked my facts" and referred to "my huge mistake," but said he could not say anything more about the matter "because now I'm dealing with police."

In a subsequent conversation with the Sentinel, Adams declined to add anything further about the episode.

In hindsight, we could have waited to examine dispatch records before publishing the claim. We understand that police are under intense pressure to deal with complex social problems on the streets of Santa Cruz, problems that are not easily solved in a city where transients, street crime, drug dealing and mental illness have become volatile political and legal issues.

The tragic and senseless murder of Shannon Collins has brought all of this back into the forefront of public discussion. The Sentinel is committed to providing an accurate and factual report on these problems. In retrospect, as a newspaper, we could have done a more rigorous job of determining the truth about the caller's claim.

- Don Miller, Sentinel editor

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**John Cohen** · ★ Top Commenter · University of California, Santa Cruz

I don't trust SCR 911. They've lied to me about public records requests. The SCPD denied police calls existed about a sex offender at my apartment complex while I had a witness to those calls when I made them. The police and SCR 911 will lie to cover their tracks. For example, a friend was wrongfully arrested because he was parked in an area to the side of a road which had no signs saying there was no parking. They arrested him based upon an illegal search because he was not illegally parked. He asked the officers to turn on their recording devices when they began to question him, which they claim they did. Wondrously, all their recording devices malfunctioned — about six officers' recording devices failed simultaneously.

Don't believe that the DA, the SCPD and SCR 911 won't lie to coverup. They will lie to evade accountability.

Reply · 3 · Unlike · Unfollow Post · Tuesday at 12:51pm

**Mike Marketello** · ★ Top Commenter · Harbor High, Santa Cruz, CA

Oh, there we go, you have an axe to grind.

Reply · 2 · Like · Tuesday at 6:25pm

**John Cohen** · ★ Top Commenter · University of California, Santa Cruz

No. I am stating the facts. They've done what they've done. I'm just stating the facts of what I and others have experienced. I don't dislike the police or SCR 911. When they're doing their job they protect me and others. The police and SCR 911 are necessary agencies. But that doesn't mean I can't be critical of them.

Reply · 2 · Unlike · Tuesday at 6:43pm

**Mike Marketello** · ★ Top Commenter · Harbor High, Santa Cruz, CA

Well you get my point I'm sure, some people seldom feel as if they have received the service they deserve. You have just accused two agencies of lying on a public forum, while at the same time suggesting they have no right to counter your claims.

Reply · 2 · Like · Tuesday at 6:49pm

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**Dennis Kidd** · Assistant General Manager at Santa Cruz Regional 9-1-1

Don't forget Mr. Adams also criticized 9-1-1 dispatchers, claiming they don't take his numerous calls seriously. Confusing to imagine what his motivation is.

Reply · 9 · Like · Follow Post · Monday at 10:58pm

**John Cohen** · ★ Top Commenter · University of California, Santa Cruz

Dennis -- I think it is extremely unprofessional for you to make a public comment as a representative for your agency SCR 911 on a public Internet forum. Especially to question the integrity of a private citizen. This is very disturbing.

I wonder if SCR 911 has an ethics policy for public comments by its (supervisory) employees. If it doesn't it should. I intend to submit a public records request to SCR 911 for its policies regarding public comments by supervisory staff.

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**Mike Marketello** · ★ Top Commenter · Harbor High, Santa Cruz, CA

Why?

Reply · Like · Tuesday at 6:23pm



**Mike Marketello** · ★ Top Commenter · Harbor High, Santa Cruz, CA

I mean, didn't the police just do the same? The dude slammed these agencies for a lack of professionalism, should they have their say?

Reply · Like · Tuesday at 6:24pm

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**janabananas** (signed in using yahoo)

Shame on you Mr. Adams, making this reflect poorly on the individuals who risk their necks to keep the rest of us safe (as possible).

In my personal emotional aftermath on this, I called the sheriff regarding a suspicious person lurking in my neighborhood last Friday. An officer was immediately dispatched and within 15 minutes there were two sheriff deputies at the site of the suspicious activity. Kudos to our local law enforcement!

Reply · 3 · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 12:35pm



**Brian Blackwell** · University of California, Santa Cruz

As an employee of a local business very close to where Shannon was killed, we call the police on a regular basis to report suspicious activity under and around the Soquel bridge..SC Police almost always respond immediately. Kinda jumped the gun there Sentinel believing that guy. Hopefully lesson learned.

Reply · 3 · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 12:59pm



**Diane Martell** · ★ Top Commenter

And what do they do Brian ??..A regular basis ??..why ???  
Time to get very very tough and NOT let these losers continue..

That is exactly the problem, you do NOT see this in Aptos, Capitola, Soquel now do you ?

Reply · Like · Tuesday at 3:01pm



**Mike Marketello** · ★ Top Commenter · Harbor High, Santa Cruz, CA

Dianne, your beef is not with the PD. The PD can't just "get tough" without the blessing of the SC City Council. What you advocate could easily be construed as police brutality by the Citizens Review Board. The PD enforces city policy and law. More than once the City Council has ordered the PD to stop enforcing the law. Remember the students blocking the road up at UC, do you think it was a PD call to just allow that to happen?

Reply · 3 · Like · Tuesday at 6:40pm



**Robin Rebecca Rhodes** · ★ Top Commenter

Why would he cry wolf like that in light of this tragedy? Just trying to get attention or something? He has some major explaining to do! I guess there are no repercussions for lying to the media.

Reply · 3 · Like · Follow Post · Monday at 11:14pm



**Rus Orlandos**

Well Mr. Adams your 15 minutes is up, please leave the building.

Reply · 5 · Like · Tuesday at 6:09am



**Clarity Lowe** · ★ Top Commenter

What a sleazy way to make the story about you Mr. Adams. Narcissisim is alive and well.

Reply · 3 · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 6:35am



**Steve Welch** · ★ Top Commenter

15 minutes of fame leads to lots of time and trouble with the law it seems. Sentinel needs to do a better job of fact checking before printing something false.

Reply · 2 · Like · Tuesday at 8:04am



**Brian Blackwell** · University of California, Santa Cruz

I agree with you Diane, it is getting out of hand. But Mike is right, what is the SCPD supposed to do? They can't do anything unless they see them actively breaking the law. They can't just round everybody up and send them somewhere else. And what can the sc council do? Make laws that you can't sit by the river and play the drums? Or a law that you can't look like a bum and hang out on pacific ave? Some of these folks are annoying and bad for businesses but some aren't breaking the law, and the others who are often don't get caught. It stinks but what can be done...hopefully we can figure find a solution.

Reply · 2 · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 9:30pm



**Colin Estes** · At Yo Mamma's House

Any time the Sentinel is forced to cover anything more complicated than a Santa Cruz sunset their writers manage to make it an unintelligible mess. My 15 year old sister should

Reply ·  2 · Like · Follow Post · 12 hours ago

**Jane Sooby** (signed in using Hotmail)



He needlessly whipped up hysteria and fear against homeless people. Some of you commentators went right along with him. How do you feel now?

Reply ·  2 · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 9:57am



**Jill Fiamma**

Why would you do that?

Reply ·  2 · Like · Follow Post · Monday at 10:39pm



**Jack Rush** ·  Top Commenter · UCSC

Hello Sentinel,

Since you are trying to "set it straight"  
how about a followup story on this article:

[http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/ci\\_19778680?IADID=Search-ww.w.santacruzsentinel.com-www.santacruzsentinel.com](http://www.santacruzsentinel.com/ci_19778680?IADID=Search-ww.w.santacruzsentinel.com-www.santacruzsentinel.com)

Now that the state is 16Billion in the hole, and you will be printing tear jerking stories about cuts to local education, teacher layoffs, shortened school days, how in the world can you keep this story off Page 1 every day ??

there is 18-20 MILLION Dollars sitting in a Schwab account and it should be applied to teachers, special ed, coaches and new facilities please followup on the County Board of Ed sitting on these funds and blowing it on their ADMINISTRATION buildings.

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Reply ·  1 · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 4:27pm



**William Peak** ·  Top Commenter · Duke University

Not to mention which, the SCPD does a fantastic job in responding to the absolute deluge of calls it must respond to in this area. They are simply overwhelmed and can't keep up with the problems being caused downtown, on the levee, under the bridge, etc. etc. However, they are extremely professional, courteous, diligent, etc., based on my experience. Kudos to SCPD.

Reply ·  1 · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 8:47am



**Diane Martell** ·  Top Commenter

That is PRECISELY the problem here ! They are deluged with calls with what ? The homeless & transients...maybe they should NOT be so courteous & nice. Time to be very mean & nasty and NOT tolerate this...

Reply · Like · Tuesday at 2:58pm



**Jack Rush** ·  Top Commenter · UCSC

Three cheers for County Educator Admin of the year  
Michael Watkins, who struggles to make ends meet on 165K a year

maybe we should have a parade down a major street to celebrate his financial wizardry.

Teachers are being laid off this summer and he has 18-20 million in the bank

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The walls of PCS are crumbling, its the #2 high school in the state and this hero is collecting interest

Divide the money to Harbor, Santa Cruz, Soquel

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Reply · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 4:37pm



**Robert Cousineau** · Harbor High

I work at the 7-11 that uneducated citizens are blaming for the death of Shannon Collins. We call the police constantly on these people and police have been quoted saying they don't care about our calls and have laughed in the faces of my manager when he asks why these calls are ignored. Gentleman like Mr. Dennis Kidd and the local police department are the real blame for the death of Shannon Collins for ignoring calls and people that could of saved Shannon life.

Reply · Like · Follow Post · 14 hours ago



**Doug Crawford** ·  Top Commenter · Works at Me Inc.

Mr. Miller: Your apology in light of the known facts was not necessary.

All objective and informed readers can readily understand why an apparent screwball like Adams, making bizarre claims in the middle of a crisis, might be confused with a concerned and logical resident trying to make us better understand a tragedy.

Adam's motives are unfathomable - but his resulting actions disgust all of us.

Reply · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 10:06pm



Shellie Miranda · ★ Top Commenter · Anaheim High School

I don't know if I believe the police on this one. I grew up near Disneyland and a rapist who mutilated his victims was left out of local papers (until his 11th victim) because local officials didn't want to scare away tourists.

Reply · Like · Follow Post · 17 hours ago



Missy Blue Bakon-Bhyter · ★ Top Commenter · The College of William and Mary

This article, especially the opening three paragraphs, are not well written at all. The sentence structure and choice of words confuse the rather straightforward meaning. You would think that an editor for a paper would have better writing skills than demonstrated by this article, one that is sure to be in the spotlight.

Reply · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 1:33am

janabananas (signed in using yahoo)

I don't find this article to be confusing or poorly written at all.

The only thing I can imagine that would make it clearer would be to open with "Whoops, we goofed."

Reply · 4 · Like · Tuesday at 12:37pm

bi56mba (signed in using yahoo)

what a liar he made a "mistake"

It might affect his business if he admits he lies. Everyone is greedy nowadays.

Reply · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 1:17pm



Kevin Cornell · Subscribe · Ryerson University

Let's hope the police can charge Don to add to his arrest record. What a truly despicable individual.

Reply · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 11:31am



Karen Ess · ★ Top Commenter

Yes, Sentinel - it's called fact-checking.

Reply · Like · Follow Post · Tuesday at 11:24am

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