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## Union Bank Robbed

By Sophie Braccini



Surveillance camera photo provided by Moraga Police Department

threaten bank employee Karin Kasra, who held the keys to the vault. "Karin (Kasra) was so calm and all the bank's employees behaved so professionally that I felt very well taken care of," said Pal, "I want to thank them." Pal believes that the two men were "professionals" who knew the bank, because they went straight for the vault and executed the robbery very quickly.

Afterwards, Pal called her husband to pick her up and she took a day and a half off work. "The therapy session offered by the bank helped," she said, "everyone reacts differently to such an experience. For me, I was aching all over, and I just couldn't think."

"Post traumatic stress syndrome can manifest in many different ways," says Foreman, "it can be sleeplessness, fear of going out in public, general anxiety, aches and pains, anger or even depression." Foreman, who was mugged 14 years ago, believes that treatments such as Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR), can be very effective.

Subsequent to the robbery a new security guard was seen in the bank. Employees, following the bank's policy, declined to comment.

The Moraga Police Department's initial press release regarding the robbery stated that the suspects' vehicle was seen driving southbound on Moraga Road, toward Canyon. Later in the week, police said that the suspect vehicle was found on Camino Peral in Moraga and was being processed by the FBI for evidence.

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On Tuesday, April 6, at approximately 9:30 a.m., two armed and masked men entered a branch of Union Bank in the Moraga Center. They threatened employees and the sole customer in the bank with guns and, after taking what was in the vault, left quickly. "It (the robbery) was executed so rapidly that the employees didn't even have time to press the emergency button," said Moraga Police Chief Robert Priebe. No one was physically hurt; the bank offered counseling to help those present cope with the emotional strain of the traumatic experience.

"The emotional pain suffered during such a traumatic experience can be severe and, untreated, can linger for years," said Moraga resident and psychologist Janet Foreman. The next day, the bank offered counseling to its employees and customer, Roos Pal (the owner of Terzetto Cuisine), who was in the bank at the time of robbery. According to Pal, the professionalism of the employees ensured that no one was hurt.

"I went to the bank that morning to get change for the restaurant," says Pal, "I was the only customer in the bank when they entered and they put a gun to my head, asking everyone to stay down." Pal was held at gunpoint the whole time and saw the second man