

## How the Salvation Army helped police in the Bellagio bandit investigation - KTNV Las Vegas

Written by Administrator

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Las Vegas, NV (KTNV) – On the heels of his arrest, we're learning new details about what the Bellagio Bandit did with some of the high value chips he stole from the casino floor last December.

Just days after the robbery, one of the tokens – worth \$25,000 – surfaced in the most unusual place: the hands of a Salvation Army volunteer.

Salvation Army officials say

their bell ringers often collect chip donations when they're on the Las Vegas Strip. So, this particular donation didn't really raise any eyebrows at first.

But after learning about the Bellagio robbery, it didn't take long for them to become pretty skeptical.

It was along the walkway between the MGM Grand Hotel-Casino and the New York, New York Hotel-Casino that a bell ringer had one of the most bizarre experiences of his life.

"We were all pretty happy until we realized it was one of the stolen chips."

Salvation Army officials learned that one of their volunteers, Robert Cornell, had a brief conversation with a passerby back on December 23. Before walking away, the man placed a \$25,000 chip in Cornell's red kettle.

When Cornell turned his kettle over to his supervisor, Eui Han, they realized the amount of the chip. Han and Cornell then tried to redeem the hefty donation for the organization, having no idea it was linked to the Bellagio robber.

According to the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department, Cornell and Han tried cashing the chip at the Bellagio. They were soon interviewed by casino officials who say the men's story

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changed a bit.

In the end, they were let go. But casino security kept the chip.

Major Lloyd, Clark County Salvation Army coordinator, says Han and Cornell are Korean natives with thick accents, and he had trouble making sense of their story at first.

In hindsight, he doubts this was a genuine act of kindness but, rather, a way for the suspect to throw police off his trail.

But not everything was completely lost.

"It gives us pause to stop and laugh, maybe some wishful thinking that the next \$25,000 will be redeemable."

The Clark County Salvation Army says the \$25,000 Bellagio chip is the largest donation they've ever received. However, they doubt the casino will honor the donation since the chip was stolen.

The Bellagio is already planning to replace their \$25,000 chips with a different type of design.

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