

United States Department of Justice

**For Immediate Release**

May 21, 2010 **United States Attorney's Office**  
**Eastern District of California**

**“Poodle Bandit” Indicted on Six Counts of Armed Bank Robbery**

FRESNO—United States Attorney Benjamin B. Wagner announced today that a federal grand jury returned a six-count indictment charging Belko Yovanovich, 52, of Somerset, with six armed bank robberies throughout the Central Valley.

This case is the product of a joint investigation by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and local law enforcement from each of the robbery locations. Assistant United States Attorney Elana Landau is prosecuting the case.

The indictment alleges that between March 8 and May 6, 2010, Yovanovich robbed six banks in five counties within the Eastern District of California: Bakersfield, Fresno, Stanislaus, San Joaquin, and Sacramento. In each of the robberies, Yovanovich wore a disguise and armed with a handgun, ordered the teller to give him all the money. As part of his disguise, Yovanovich wore a curly gray wig, leading authorities to nickname him the "Poodle Bandit." Yovanovich was apprehended after a good Samaritan saw him leaving the Oak Valley Bank in Modesto, and called authorities who responded and made the arrest.

Yovanovich is in custody; he is scheduled for arraignment on May 21, 2010 before U.S. Magistrate Judge Sandra Snyder. He faces a maximum statutory penalty of 25 years in prison for each count. The actual sentence, however, will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of any applicable statutory factors and the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables.