

Jewel Thief Strikes in West U., Memorial

It sounds like a scene from a movie: a handsome real estate agent discovers a respectable looking man intent on pilfering property during an “open house.”

“I don’t think that’s yours,” the civil tongued Realtor tells the thief, as his hand, full of jewelry, is withdrawn from a bureau drawer.

“No, it’s not,” the thief responds, just as politely, before body slamming the agent and making an escape.



But it was real life, and it all came down last week during the showing of a \$2.8 million home on Buffalo Speedway.

Police believe the same man pulled a similar heist during an “open house” in the Memorial area earlier in the week.

Amazingly, the West U. home belonged to a family whose business is security, specifically facial identification software used by the FBI, CIA, and other law enforcement agencies throughout the world.

Police believe they have a very good likeness of the thief made using that software and they may even know the thief’s identity.

West U. Realtor Roger Martin says he arrived at the home Sunday afternoon and noticed a dark sedan already parked, nose out, in the home’s driveway. A man got out of the car and followed Martin into the home.



He told Martin he was from the Dallas area and had a Dallas real estate agent representing him.

He was, he said, looking for a home in Houston.

More agents arrived to assist at the open house, and Martin asked one of them to show the man the home.

When the man returned to the main area, Martin asked him to “sign in.”

“I pulled a pen out to give him and realized he had disappeared,” Martin says.

So, Martin listened for a moment, and believing he heard “a mouse in the cupboard,” went down a hallway, where he discovered the fellow rummaging through a drawer.

That’s when the polite encounter, followed by the hasty exit, occurred.

“Three of us got a very good look at him,” Martin says. They also got a partial license plate number.

“HAR (Houston Association of Realtors) jumped right on it,” says Ann Martin, Roger’s wife, and manager of their real estate firm. “They sent out an email blast to Realtors warning them about the thief,” she says. And that’s when they found out about the theft in Hunter’s Creek Village.

There, a Greenwood King agent was showing a home when a man with a similar visage and story about Dallas paid a visit, leaving with some of the homeowner’s jewels.

He is described by those who have encountered him as a 50ish white man with short gray hair and a stocky build, about six feet tall.

His description matches that of a man convicted in the Dallas area of similar crimes, Steven Breed.

Breed is a former minister and teacher who has apparently taken up a criminal career late in life.

The 56-year-old Breed has been convicted of credit card abuse and theft, specifically taking jewelry from homes during open houses.

He has also been charged with stealing money from realtors. His criminal career may be tied to a gambling addiction.

Breed was released from jail about two weeks ago, and almost immediately began attending “open houses” again.

On Jan. 12, Plano police warned North Texas real estate agents that Breed might be paying their listings a visit.

Realtors reported seeing him at six open houses in the Plano area over that weekend.