

2 gunmen sought in kidnapping

Two gunmen who kidnapped a 75-year-old Midway Drive restaurant owner and escaped after shooting at California Highway Patrol officers Friday night were still being sought by police yesterday.

Helge Hansen, owner of Nordic Inn at 3577 Midway Drive, was not injured during the ordeal, during which at times he was shut into his car trunk while the suspects drove around.

Hansen had just locked up the restaurant at 9:20 p.m. when the two, one carrying a 12-gauge shotgun, approached him and forced him into his 1988 BMW, police spokesman Bill Robinson.

The pair, a white man in his late 30s and a black man in his late 20s, drove to La Jolla, and ordered Hansen into the car trunk. The gunmen drove on to North County, where Hansen was allowed to return to the passenger area, Robinson said.

As they traveled on Interstate 8 near Sports Arena Boulevard, two highway patrol officers attempted to pull over the driver for suspected drunken driving.

The BMW stopped and the passenger got out and fired the shotgun three times at officers Phil Konstantin and Robert Smith, Robinson said. The officers were not hit, but one blast punctured their car radiator, disabling the vehicle.

The suspects drove to the 3000 block of Rue D'Orleans in Pacific Beach, where they shut Hansen into the trunk again and abandoned the car.

Hansen shouted for help and made other noises for nearly half an hour before a passer-by freed him.



The San Diego Union/Dave Siccardi

...ns are served a nourishing meal at the Senior Community Center.

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tion. Most of the homeless are
men. Women fleeing abusu-
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percent, according to the California Association of Realtors. Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security benefits increased only 43 percent during the same period.

"We've got people here who are simply poor and on the streets because there is no affordable housing," said Anne Gillespie Brown, executive director of the Senior Community Center.

Until recently, housing choices available to the poor in San Diego had been steadily shrinking due to redevelopment of low-income neighborhoods.

By the late 1970s, more than 1,000 older residential-hotel units were lost in San Diego due to development. Thirty percent of this housing provided shelter to seniors — and their forced displacement created a new homeless class.

In recent years, however, the city has been receiving favorable reviews

for creating new housing for the homeless, without the use of tax dollars, according to Judith Lenthall, a city senior-housing planner.

Through relaxed zoning codes that allow more units per building, private developers are building additional "single-room occupancy hotels," or SRO units, to replace those lost.

While the 100- to 200-square-foot units — some are as large as 500 square feet — are being touted as the cheapest form of housing available, critics have said the rents are often beyond the financial means of the elderly poor. SRO rooms that were once viewed with disdain are now considered acceptable housing by tourists and minimum-wage service workers.

A Senior Community Centers survey indicated that seniors spend from \$270 to \$400 a month on SROs.