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The law enforcement sweep through the San Fernando Valley concluded with a news conference attended by most of the county's TV stations. Pictured are, from left, Los Angeles City Councilman Tom LaBonge, LASD Capt. Dan Finkelstein, Metro San Fernando Valley GM David Armijo, Los Angeles City Councilwoman Wendy Greuel, City Attorney Rocky Delgadillo, and Los Angeles City Councilman Dennis Zine.



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LOS ANGELES SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SFV Tagger Task Force Sweeps Up 24 in Anti-Graffiti Raid

(April 13, 2004) A multi-agency law enforcement task force swept through the San Fernando Valley, last Friday, conducting searches and arresting 24 suspects in a raid targeting graffiti vandalism and its associated violent crimes.

The 70-member task force charged three suspects with felony vandalism, 13 with probation violations and seven with more serious charges that included attempted murder and drug possession. One juvenile also was charged.

The raid, led by the LAPD's North Hollywood Community Tagger Task Force, also turned up graffiti implements, narcotics and a number of weapons.

Officers also confiscated a grenade, an assault rifle with bayonet stolen in Las Vegas, a .38 caliber handgun possibly used in a recent drive-by shooting and two knives.

How the day went...



Deputies convene at dawn.



Task force teams prepare to search

Agencies cooperating in the raid, which began at 7 a.m. and concluded by mid-morning, were the Sheriff's Transit Services Bureau, LAUSD Police, Burbank Police and the LA County Probation Department.

'Hit 48 locations'

"This was very successful," said Sheriff's Lt. Pat Jordan. "We hit 48 locations (and) gathered evidence to help clear up an attempted murder with a drive-by, and evidence that helped clear a serious home-invasion robbery."

The LAPD scheduled the operation for early morning to catch the suspects before they headed off to school. That meant an early wakeup call for some as officers searched their rooms for graffiti tools, weapons, narcotics or other illegal material.

"We also gathered intelligence on other taggers working in the San Fernando Valley," said Jordan. "We expect to make arrests based on that intelligence in the near future."

The day's events concluded with a news conference attended by most of the county's TV stations.

"Today was a strategic initiative...they're going to be doing on an on-going basis," said San Fernando Valley Sector General Manager David Armijo. "The cost savings for (Metro) means more service we can provide."

-- Story by Bill Heard, Jose Ubaldo and Lisa Huynh

residence.



Deputy bags evidence.



Tagger suspects are rounded up.



The bounty of graffiti tools, weapons, narcotics or other illegal material