Merced Police Department

PRESS RELEASE

August 27th, 2013

Sgt. Scott Skinner
Investigation Division
Office: (209) 385-4702

For Immediate Release

Date and Time: 8-24-2013 (9:09pm, 2:09am)

Location:

Incident: Two shooting, three pursuits and numerous arrests

Suspect: Juvenile

Case Number:

The first incident started at 9:09pm when officers responded to the 1200 block of Canal for reports of shots fired. The victim who is a validated Sureno gang member told police that a red mustang convertible pulled into the apartment complex. A passenger exited the vehicle and began shooting at the victim. Several shots were fired at the victim. The victim was not injured and witnesses described seeing four occupants in the vehicle.

At 9:40 hours, Officers Nelson and Alvarez of the Gang Violence Suppression Unit (GVSU) spotted a red mustang convertible with four occupants. The officers initiated a traffic stop and the vehicle failed to yield. The officers pursued the vehicle for several blocks and the pursuit came to an end when the vehicle rear ended another vehicle in the 1100 block of W 14th St. The driver of the other vehicle sustained minor injury and was treated and released at the scene. All occupants of the vehicle fled the area on foot.

Three of the four suspects were arrested and the fourth was able to get away. The fourth individual was recognized by the officers who have contacted him in the past. At the scene officers recovered a Smith/ Wesson 38 caliber handgun.

Arrested were Angelo Anthony Flores (20), Hugo Nemecio Ramos (19), and Michael Valentino Nava (27). The fourth individual, Juan Ceja Ramos (18) was arrested Monday morning. All individuals are from Merced and are validated Norteno gang members. All subjects were booked into the Merced County Jail for attempted homicide, evading arrest, felon in possession of a firearm and participating in a criminal street gang.

The next incident started at 2:09am when Officers Bowen was on a call in the 1300 block of W 12th St and heard approximately10 shots to the west of his location. Upon checking the area the officer noticed two vehicles in the roadway and it appeared that the occupants were involved in some type of argument. When the officer turned on his overhead lights to contact them, both vehicles left at a high rate of speed in different directions.

Officer Bowen called for assistance and pursed one of the vehicles as was driving approximately 55-60 mph in a residential area. The vehicle failed to negotiate a turn onto U St and came to rest in a yard at the corner of W12th and U St. All five of the occupants exited the vehicle and two of them started to walk off. One of the remaining subjects walked to the front of the vehicle and the officers lost sight of the individual for several seconds before they walked back towards the officer. All five individuals were detained. Officer Bowen located a New England 22 caliber revolver under the front passenger tire of the vehicle. The revolver had four spent casings and one live round in the cylinder.

Arrested were Richard Noel Villafan (22), Angel Aguilar Zamora (20) and Angelica Villafan (19). The two other passengers were released after questioning. Richard Villafan was arrested for evading police and possession of a firearm. Angel and Angelica were arrested for possession of a firearm.

As this was going on Sgt. Weiss was responding to the area to assist when he saw the second vehicle traveling eastbound on W 13th St at a high rate of speed. The vehicle made a turn onto Vst at which time the driver lost control and hit the cement wall under Highway 99. Sgt. Weiss pursued the vehicle northbound on Highway 99 and after exiting the highway the vehicle stopped at the intersection of Ashby and Beachwood. All occupants were detained at the scene. Upon searching the vehicle, officers located 22 caliber rounds in the center console, but no handgun was recovered. Officers later checked the area the traveled and located a bag containing more 22 caliber rounds.

Arrested was Raquel Julianna Martinez (20) for driving under the influence, evading police and hit and run. Isaiah Nathaniel Lopez (20) for outstanding warrants. All subjects are from Merced. Anyone with information can contact Det. Chris Russell at (209) 385-4707 or Det. Joe Deliman at (209) 385-6692 or the tip line at(209) 385-4725.

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