

NEWS

From the Office of

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Two-Year Investigation Cripples Violent Victorville Gang

VICTORVILLE – A two-year investigation by the Sheriff Department’s gang team led to the arrests and/or arrest warrants against 75 members of a Victorville gang with ties to the Mexican Mafia, County officials announced today at a press conference in Victorville.

“I want to congratulate and thank the Sheriff’s gang team and everyone who worked on this case for their dedication and hard work in severely disrupting this violent gang that had been terrorizing part of Victorville,” said First District Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt, who spoke at the press conference alongside County Sheriff Rod Hoops and District Attorney Mike Ramos. “Gang members are on notice that we will continue to be vigilant in protecting our neighborhoods and our citizens. If you are committing crimes, we will catch you and put you away.”

The investigation began in early 2007 when gang investigators noticed an increase in crimes related to East Side Victoria, a gang formed in the early 1970s which claimed the area of Old Town Victorville as its turf. The gang has been involved in crimes ranging from drugs to kidnapping to murder. Investigators began cultivating informants, gathering intelligence and identifying the key leader and his lieutenants.

Fred “Joker” Archuleta was identified as the leader of the gang, until 2008 when George “Rascal” Degraw assumed control and oversaw an extensive criminal enterprise that included narcotics, guns, assault, attempted murder and extortion. Investigators learned that many crimes went unreported because victims were afraid of retaliation.

“That residents were afraid to even report crimes shows the demoralizing, terroristic effect gangs can have on entire communities,” Supervisor Mitzelfelt said. “Thanks to this outstanding police work, the people of Victorville can rest a little easier.”

Investigators were also able to interrupt planned robberies, assaults with deadly weapons and even a kidnapping. During the investigation, they recovered guns, ammunition, cash, narcotics, stolen property, stolen vehicles and gang paraphernalia.

During a sweep this morning, many of the suspects were taken into custody and were being processed during the press conference.

“The Board of Supervisors, the District Attorney and the Sheriff always have public safety as our top priority and I pledge that operations like this will continue to have our full support,” Supervisor Mitzelfelt said, also commending the Victorville City Council for providing significant funds through its Sheriff’s police contract to allow for strong anti-gang efforts .