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Gang-Related Crime Enforcement Underway In And Around Ukiah

Two suspected gang members found in possession of an illegally-modified shotgun and firearm ammunition were taken into custody Tuesday near Oak Manor Elementary School by law enforcement officers working together under the auspices of the Mendocino County Multi-Agency Gang Suppression Unit.

Arrested yesterday afternoon were Rogelio Lorenzi Zarate, age 35, and Phillip Ronnie Lopez, Jr., age 26, both of Ukiah. These two suspected gang members – both being individuals prohibited from possessing firearms or ammunition because of prior felony convictions – were first observed at Oak Manor Park, which is located adjacent to the Oak Manor Elementary School in Ukiah. School was in session at the time the suspects were contacted at the park and subsequently arrested. The men were taken into custody for the illegal possession of a firearm within one thousand feet of a school, for being felons in possession of a firearm, for being felons in possession of ammunition, and for parole and probation violations.

Local law enforcement officials believe these arrests should serve as notice in general that increased gang-related investigations and arrests will continue to take place around the county. Concerned citizens who may observe suspected gang activities or who may have gang-related information are requested to assist in the fight against gang influences and gang-related crime by timely reporting what they observe and know to local law enforcement agencies.

Coordinated by DA Investigator Bryan Arrington, the following law enforcement agencies collaboratively work together as the Mendocino County Multi-Agency Gang Suppression Unit (MAGSU): the Fort Bragg Police Department, the Mendocino County Sheriff's Office, the Mendocino County Adult Probation Department, the Mendocino County Major Crimes Task Force, the Ukiah Police Department, the Willits Police Department, State Parole, the Department of Homeland Security, and the Mendocino County District Attorney's Office.

Any individual arrested should be considered not guilty unless and until the contrary is proven in a court of law. Formal charges have been filed by the DA against the two men named above.