FORT BRAGG POLICE DEPARTMENT

250 Cypress Street
Fort Bragg, CA 95437-5437

Neil Cervenka
Chief of Police

(707) 961-2800
Fax: (707) 961-2806

MEDIA RELEASE

Firearm Brandishing Leads to Chase and Arrest
04/16/2024

On April 15, 2024 at approximately 11:14 PM, Fort Bragg police officers were dispatched to an escalating verbal disturbance in the 500 block of Kempe Way.

Officers arrived and saw a male, later identified as Elijah Zapata, 21, of Santa Rosa, immediately run from the area. Officers pursued on foot and after a short chase, caught Zapata. The other individuals involved stated Zapata had threatened them with a gun. Officers searched the area Zapata fled and located an unregistered, unloaded revolver.

No one was injured in the altercation, which was verbal only. After investigation, officers determined the other individuals involved were victims. It was also confirmed Zapata was currently out of custody on his Own Recognizance on an unrelated case with terms to Obey All Laws.

Captain Thomas O'Neal said, "I'm very proud of our officers. While most of our community slept, these officers chased and arrested an armed suspect. They also recovered an illegal firearm, getting it out of the hands of a criminal. They undoubtedly made our community safer."

Zapata was arrested and booked in the Mendocino County Jail for 422(a) PC – Criminal Threats (Felony), 148(a)(1) PC – Resist/Obstruct/Delay Arrest (Misd), 415(2) PC – Disturb the Peace (Misd), 166(a)(4) PC – Violate Court Order (Misd), 417(a)(2)(A) PC – Brandish Firearm (Misd), and 25400(a)(2) PC – Carrying a Concealed Firearm (Misd). Officers requested a Bail Enhancement of $50,000, which was authorized by a judge.

Anyone with information on this incident is encouraged to contact Officer Frank of the Fort Bragg Police Department at (707)961-2800 ext 210.

This information is being released by Chief Neil Cervenka. All media inquiries should contact him at ncervenka@fortbragg.com.

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