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SFPD Arrests Suspects in Sideshow, Seizes Illegal Assault Rifle, and Tows Vehicles #26-007

Image







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On January 18, 2026, at approximately 9:20 p.m., San Francisco Police officers assigned to the Stunt Driving Response Unit (SDRU) responded to the area of Clement Street and 32nd Avenue regarding vehicles engaged in illegal sideshow activities.

Officers arrived on scene and observed multiple vehicles driving recklessly as pedestrians and other vehicles blocked the intersection.

Officers arrived on scene and began to clear vehicles and pedestrians from the area to protect the public's safety while collecting vehicle information and other evidence for follow-up investigations.

As the vehicles began to disperse, officers observed a vehicle wanted by the Oakland Police Department that was involved in stunt driving. Officers were advised that the occupants of the vehicle may be armed.

SFPD officers initiated a traffic stop of the vehicle near 41st Avenue and Clement Street and detained the four occupants. During the detention, officers seized an illegal assault rifle, an extended magazine, multiple magazines, and ammunition.

Officers developed probable cause to arrest 22-year-old Albert Martinez Zavala of Vacaville for firearm violations. He was booked into San Francisco County Jail.

During this incident, a separate vehicle involved in the stunt driving event at the intersection of Clement Street and 32nd Ave was identified by CHP air support parked near the 7000 block of California Street. Officers located the vehicle and detained the occupants without incident.

Officers developed probable cause to arrest the driver, identified as 22-year-old Francisco Javier Mercado of Modesto. Mercado was booked into San Francisco County Jail for his outstanding out-of-county warrant and for reckless endangerment and participation in a stunt driving event.

Officers towed the vehicle from the scene.

The SFPD Stunt Driving Response Unit and Crime Gun Investigations Center (CGIC) will be following up and continuing to investigate the individuals and vehicles involved in these sideshows.

Photos are attached to this news release.

“These results speak volumes about the effectiveness of our citywide collaboration and your commitment to keeping San Francisco safe,” **said SFPD Richmond Station Captain Kevin Lee.** *“Thanks to the swift actions and teamwork of our Stunt Driving Response Unit and Richmond Station officers, the SFPD was able to take illegal weapons off our streets and hold suspects accountable.”*

The SFPD encourages anyone from the public to report side shows and stunt driving events whenever they occur so the SFPD can respond and investigate the incidents. The public should call 911 in an emergency and 1-415-553-0123 for non-emergencies.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the SFPD at 1-415-575-4444 or *Text-A-Tip* to TIP411 and begin the message with SFPD.

SFPD CASE# 260-034-516, 260-034-431

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