SAN MATEO POLICE DEPARTMENT
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Chief of Police

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MEDIA RELEASE / COMMUNITY ALERT

For Immediate Release No. 20261031-074
Saturday, October 31, 2026

Two Arrested Following Vehicle Pursuit and Discovery of Illegal Firearms

Proactive enforcement leads to two arrests and the seizure of suspected machine guns, firearm components, ammunition, and evidence of marijuana sales.

San Mateo, CA – On October 30, 2026, at approximately 6:41 p.m., officers assigned to the San Mateo Police Department's Crime Reduction Unit (CRU) conducted a traffic stop on a Dodge Journey for vehicle code violations related to loud music and a failure to come to a complete stop in the area of East Hillsdale Boulevard and Saratoga Drive. The driver and sole occupant, Israel Lavea, initially pulled over near a car wash adjacent to the police department. As officers approached the vehicle, Lavea suddenly accelerated and fled westbound on East Hillsdale Boulevard at a high rate of speed.

Officers witnessed Lavea commit several dangerous traffic violations, including driving on the wrong side of the roadway. Officers eventually lost sight of the vehicle as it traveled eastbound on East Hillsdale Boulevard toward Curtiss Street.

Through their investigation, officers identified a possible address associated with Lavea in the 100 block of 36th Avenue. Upon arriving in the area, officers located the Dodge Journey parked in a nearby carport and observed Lavea standing near the vehicle. When officers attempted to detain him, Lavea fled on foot. Following a brief foot pursuit, Lavea surrendered and was taken into custody without further incident.

During the foot pursuit, Lavea attempted to discard a backpack, which officers subsequently recovered. A search of the backpack revealed evidence consistent with marijuana sales.

Based on evidence developed during the investigation, officers obtained a search warrant for an associated residence in the 100 block of 36th Avenue. At approximately 11:30 p.m., officers served the warrant. After initially receiving no response, four individuals exited the residence.

During the subsequent search, officers located a significant collection of firearms, firearm components, and ammunition, including:

- Two Spike's Tactical AR-15-style firearms identified as machine guns
- Five Anderson Manufacturing AR-15 lower receivers
- Twelve .223-caliber magazines, some loaded
- Two .40-caliber magazines
- Two firearm scopes
- A large quantity of ammunition

Further investigation determined the two suspected machine guns were located in a bedroom associated with Kaeli Lavea. Ultimately, Israel Lavea was arrested for felony evading a peace officer with wanton disregard for safety, evading a peace officer by driving against traffic, resisting an officer, and possession of marijuana for sale. Kaeli Lavea was arrested for possession of a machine gun and possession of an assault weapon.

This investigation highlights the proactive work of SMPD's Crime Reduction Unit and the department's continued commitment to removing dangerous weapons from the community, addressing illegal drug activity, and holding individuals accountable for conduct that threatens public safety.

ARRESTED
Israel Lavea, 19-year-old San Mateo resident
Kaeli Lavea-22-year-old San Mateo resident

CHARGES:
Israel Lavea-2800.2 (A) VC, 2800.4 VC, 148 (a) (1) PC, 11359 (B) HS
Kaeli Lavea-32625 (A) PC, 30605 (A) PC

MEDIA CONTACT
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