

Deputies acted properly, witness says

A freelance photographer who accompanied sheriff's deputies on a marijuana raid into the Last Chance area in July testified Thursday that he didn't see deputies acting inappropriately.

On the contrary, Frederick "Rick" Brown, who was on assignment for Time Magazine at the time, said he witnessed two women "flip off" deputies, and heard another woman yell an obscenity as the deputies departed.

The testimony was heard in a brief hearing Thursday before Superior Court Judge Chris Cottle on a lawsuit filed recently by Last Chance residents, who are complaining that deputies harassed them on several occasions.

Brown was called to the stand by Assistant County Counsel Jim Ritch-

tion.

Brown said he also heard "jungle drums" in the Last Chance area when deputies arrived. "I was rather incredulous" at hearing the drums, he said.

He was told by sheriff's Lt. Phil Kirkland that the drums were used as a warning signal by residents.

Brown testified Thursday because of a scheduling conflict which will make him unavailable on Oct. 14.

His testimony, and that of others, will be used by Judge Cottle to determine if there is enough evidence to support an injunction against the sheriff's office.

The Last Chance residents are seeking to obtain a court order prohibiting any searches of the area without the proper warrants, an injunction against reckless driving, and an order requiring agents to identify themselves when inside the boundaries, among other things.

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