

Aptos burglaries take sharp dip since arrests

By LANE WALLACE
STAFF WRITER

Burglaries in Aptos have decreased sharply since a series of arrests in December and the first two months of this year, Santa Cruz County Sheriff's deputies said yesterday.

Residential burglaries in Aptos dropped from 28 in January, double the monthly average, to 10 in February and to two in the first 10 days of this month, said Sgt. Joe Hemingway. The figures include La Selva Beach.

Deputies arrested 15 people in December and January, most of the them juveniles, for burglaries in Aptos, Hemingway said.

Aptos burglaries

Month	Number
October '93	9
November '93	17
December '93	21
January '94	28
February '94	10
*March '94	2

*March figures for first 8 days.

Residential burglaries reported to Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Office, including La Selva Beach.

Deputies suspected men driving a white van were committing some of the burglaries, Hemingway said, and stopped the van in Aptos Jan. 22. There wasn't enough evidence to arrest the men, Hemingway said, but the van and the men haven't been seen locally since.

In January, Hemingway said, deputies arrested four teenagers who had been stealing keys from cars at Rancho Del Mar shopping center. The boys would look at the auto registration to get the owner's address, then go there later and burglarize the home and steal the car.

The rash of burglarizes prompted discussions at the Rio Del Mar and Seascape improvement association meetings in January, both of which drew large crowds.

Since then, a number of areas have started setting up Neighborhood Watch groups, where people make an effort to watch for suspicious activity.

Even with the sharp increase in December, Hemingway said, residential burglaries in Aptos dropped from 194 in 1992 to 165 last year.