



Santa Cruz County Sheriff deputy Steve Watson shows a sampling of recent tagging on a vending machine Monday at Aptos High. Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

# Officer tags graffiti crew

*Crime and Criminals - Graffiti*  
UCSC student, 19, allegedly part of 'IBS' group that painted schools *R-P 12803*

By MICHAEL SEVILLE  
OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

A three-week investigation is slowly drawing to an end for one Santa Cruz Sheriff's deputy as an arrest of a University of California, Santa Cruz student seems to be the end of the line for one local group of graffiti vandals.

"With the arrest of the UCSC student, we now have the four core members of the 'IBS' crew," said Steve Watson, a deputy with the Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department and the school resource officer at Aptos High School. "We have a total of seven arrests — four members of this specific crew and three other juveniles who were identified through the investigation, but were not part of this specific tagging crew."

The UCSC student, identified as Evan Kuhn, 19, a freshman who is currently living in the dorms at the university, was identified after three other members of the "IBS" crew were arrested in the past several months.

After receiving information on Kuhn's possible link to the crew, deputies obtained a search warrant for his dormitory and his family's home in Aptos. The searches reportedly produced further evidence of his involvement including an art book full of the "IBS" sign.

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Ken Bogges, lead painter for PVUSD, points out a door that has been damaged by graffiti at Aptos High. Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

## PVUSD painter brushes, sprays and rolls away unsightly graffiti

By TARMO HANNULA  
OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

Ken Bogges is on a roll.

As long as the spate of graffiti keeps appearing across the walls, doors, glass, windows screens, vehicles, furniture, retaining walls and vending machines at area campuses, the lead painter for Pajaro Valley Unified School District is staying busy with his paint rollers, brushes and spray guns covering it all up.

Though a recent major breakthrough — the arrests of several graffiti taggers by the

Santa Cruz County Sheriff's Department — has provided some relief to Bogges and his two other full-time painters with the district, he describes the chore as constant.

"It's frustrating because we are just trying to keep the campuses nice," Bogges said. "With many of the paint repairs we do, it comes down to spot painting, which really doesn't look that great — but it covers up the graffiti."

As a time- and money-saving approach to the problem, spot

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# OFFICER

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The IBS crew, which stands for "I Bomb Schools" and the "Insane Bomb Squad," has been identified as a group of local teenagers who target schools in south Santa Cruz County with their specific tagging names and crew name.

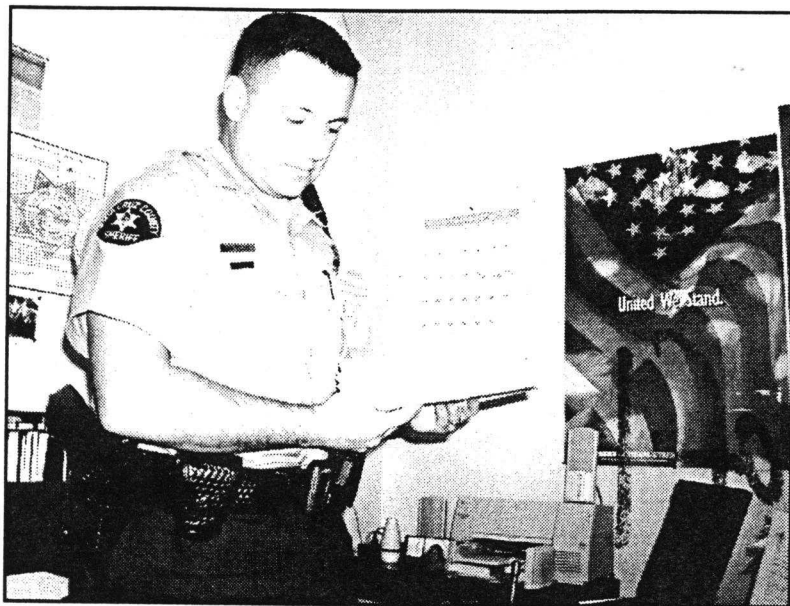
"I estimate that the total costs of the cleanup for the vandalism that this particular group is responsible for will be between \$2,000 and \$3,000," said Watson. "The real problem is that graffiti can only be covered with spot painting and that makes the whole wall look bad."

Because the taggings are generally isolated to one section of a school, the paint that covers up the damage makes the whole wall look discolored.

"It is really frustrating because we could be doing so much more for the students," said Ken Bogges, the lead painter for Pajaro Valley Unified School District. "We could be repainting walls and other things to make the schools a more comfortable place. But instead, I have spent the last six days covering graffiti."

A total of six PVUSD schools and UCSC are believed to have been targeted by the IBS crew. The crew specifically targets schools because of a strong dislike for the educational system, according to Watson.

The charges that each individu-



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

**Santa Cruz County Sheriff's deputy Steve Watson, school resource officer at Aptos High, reviews a file that is about an inch thick that he accrued investigating a rash of PVUSD and UCSC campus graffiti tagging.**

al is facing ranges from felony vandalism to conspiracy to commit vandalism.

The suspects are believed to be responsible for recent vandalism in the Aptos Village area, on the trestles over the freeway, in addition to the schools.

Aptos High Assistant Principal Tom Tatum said that Watson has proved to be a tremendous help in knocking out graffiti problems at the campus. "His work has been terrific," Tatum said. "We've been

working with him closely on these issues and he has helped the school move forward with this problem."

"No one had ever linked all the taggings together until Ken (Bogges) recognized some tags that were appearing at various school sites throughout PVUSD," said Watson. "From there, using new digital technology that is helping collect, identify and make connections to other sites, I was able to piece the case together."