

Inside: Your Community's Best Calendar of Events

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BLOSSOM VALLEY *Times*

July 1999 • Volume 14, Number 7

Santa Clara County cities announce a unified front in the war against graffiti: New program, logo, and tough message unveiled

Special to the Times

At a press conference in front of Juvenile Hall, representatives of the Santa Clara County Cities Association, the District Attorney and a Juvenile Court Judge unveiled the logo and message for a new countywide anti-graffiti program.

The aggressive enforcement and public relations campaign is dubbed "TAG YOU LOSE." The message to would-be graffiti vandals is clear and direct. When you get caught doing graffiti in Santa Clara County, you will lose your drivers' license, lose your time to mandatory community service, and lose your money paying for damages.

The Santa Clara County Cities Association will coordinate a series of posters, bumper stickers and billboards that will appear in schools, libraries, buses, movie theaters, and wherever else young people congregate. At the press conference, the poster design was unveiled. The poster reads, "Tag You Lose - Do Graffiti - Lose Your License, Lose Your Weekend, Lose Your Money - It's the Law." A Valley Transportation Authority bus and a Waste Management truck with large "TAG YOU LOSE" signs were the backdrop for the press conference.

Santa Clara County Cities Association

President Pat Dando declared, "We need to do a better job getting the message to kids and parents alike - that there are real legal consequences when you get caught committing a graffiti crime in Santa Clara County."

The "TAG YOU LOSE" Program is unique. This is the first time that all fifteen cities in Santa Clara County have agreed to work together to promote the same powerful message that will get kids' attention. In fact, every city and town council in the County has passed a resolution and a pledge of support for this campaign.

"We believe that this community awareness approach will make a real difference. Just as intensive public relations campaigns about the legal consequences of drinking and driving helped change people's behavior, the same will hold true with graffiti," added Santa Clara County District Attorney George Kennedy.

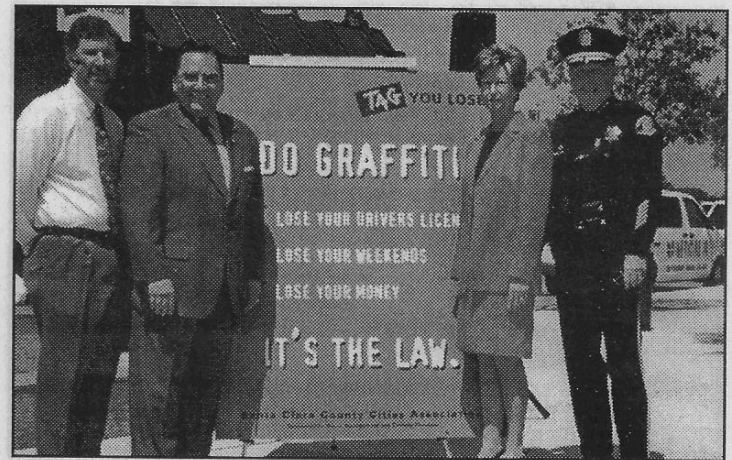
When advertised, the laws and programs to hold youth accountable for graffiti will have a significant impact. The State "Do Graffiti - Lose Your License" law allows the suspension of a drivers' license as punishment for the conviction of a graffiti offense. The County's "T.A.G.-Your-It" Program assigns convicted taggers and their parents a specific area to keep clean

of graffiti for up to one year. And, a graffiti offense can hurt your pocketbook, as taggers and their parents can be held financially responsible for damages.

The initial sponsors of the program were announced: Westfield Shopping towns, Waste Management,

Valley Transportation Authority, Pacific Bell, Century Theatres, Empire Broadcasting Corp., Orloff/Williams & Co., and Transportation Displays, Inc.

The "TAG YOU LOSE" message will begin to appear throughout the County over the next two weeks. Summertime advertising will build up to a back-to-school blitz in the Fall.



Pictured, left to right: Community Services Supervisor **Rick Stanton**, Mayor **Ron Gonzales**, Councilmember and President of the Santa Clara County Cities Association **Pat Dando**, and Police Chief **William Lansdowne**.

The Santa Clara County Cities Association is a coalition of all fifteen cities in Santa Clara County. It is the only organization with an elected official from each city serving on the Board. The Association serves as a clearinghouse for public policy and works toward county-wide municipal cooperation.