



## SAN MATEO POLICE DEPARTMENT

Ed Barberini  
Chief of Police

200 Franklin Pkwy  
San Mateo, CA 94403  
(650) 522-7710  
[www.sanmateopolice.org](http://www.sanmateopolice.org)

### MEDIA RELEASE / COMMUNITY ALERT

For Immediate Release No. 20250929-068

Monday, September 29, 2025

#### Cruise Night Ends in Cuffs for Driver Evading Officers

*Driver arrested on numerous charges after evading officers for various traffic violations, driving impaired, and found to be in possession of a ghost gun.*

San Mateo, CA – On Saturday evening, September 27, 2025, a Cruise Night was held in the city of San Mateo along S. El Camino Real from 3<sup>rd</sup> Ave. to Hillsdale Blvd. Annually, this event brings thousands of car enthusiasts to San Mateo to showcase their cars. Many utilize the private parking lots of businesses along S. El Camino Real to display their cars and line the streets to spectate those “cruising”. While this event is mostly innocuous, causing some traffic delays, there are occasionally a handful of actual enforcement actions taken. San Mateo PD always attempts to make contact with organizers and collaborate on public safety. We staff the event with SMPD officers and supplement with outside agencies to address any possible issues and/or concerns.

At approximately 7:57pm, our Crime Reduction Unit (CRU) was driving the cruise route. As they approached the intersection of Avila Rd. and S. El Camino Real, a Buick made an illegal u-turn in front of them, causing them and others to slam on their brakes. As the officers attempted to conduct a traffic stop on the vehicle, the driver increased speed and fled. The driver drove recklessly into oncoming traffic and through a red light, at which time the “pursuit” was terminated due to the amount of vehicular traffic and potential for harm to public safety.

A Traffic Officer assigned to the Cruise was stationed south of this incident at 17<sup>th</sup> Ave. and S. El Camino Real when he heard tires screeching. Unaware of the incident involving other officers, he saw the Buick swerving around stopped traffic and ran a red light in front of him, so he attempted to stop the vehicle. The Buick continued to evade, and in doing so, side-swiped a car but kept fleeing south. As the officer, who was on a motorcycle, was behind the Buick, the driver “brake checked” the officer, causing the officer to maneuver his bike to avoid a collision with the back of the Buick. As the driver approached the stoplight at 20<sup>th</sup> Ave. and S. El Camino Real, he had to finally stop his vehicle due to stopped traffic with nowhere to go. At this time, officers were able to detain him and his two passengers.

Inside the vehicle, officers located an unloaded “ghost gun” with two magazines and extra ammunition. As our investigation continued, the driver, identified as Ronald Wetzel, displayed signs of intoxication. It was determined he was driving with a .17% BAC and had a warrant for his arrest. Ronald Wetzel was arrested on the warrant and numerous on-view charges and booked into the San Mateo County Jail. The vehicle was towed and the two passengers were released at the scene.

While we encourage car enthusiasts to meet and share their passion, crime and traffic violations will not be tolerated in our city. Traffic signals exist for a reason and should never be disregarded. If you drink, do not drive. And if you are involved in a crash, you have a duty to exchange information.

**ARRESTED**

Ronald Wetzel, 34-year-old Fremont resident

**CHARGES:**

2800.2(a) VC: Evade peace officer with wanton disregard for public safety, 245(c) PC: Assault on a peace officer with a deadly weapon, 25400(a)(1) PC: Carry a concealed weapon in a vehicle, 23920(a) PC: Possess a firearm without identification markings, 30515(a)(4) PC: Assault weapon (semiautomatic pistol without fixed magazine, threaded barrel), 14601.2(a) VC: Drive on suspended license for DUI, 20002(a) VC: Hit and run property damage, and 23152(b) VC: Driving under the influence of alcohol, Warrant

###