

## New police unit tries to make schools safer

Last month Operation SAFE police officers solved a drive-by murder just down the street from Faragut High School. And when a Crane High School teacher was shot Tuesday, an officer from the same unit ran to her side and aided her.

Now in its first year, Operation SAFE, which stands for Schools Are For Education, has been busy, making more than 8,000 arrests in and around the Chicago public schools since September, said Lt. Thomas Byrne, commander of the new school patrol unit.

Most have been misdemeanor arrests, but 169 were for robbery, 187 for aggravated battery and 189 for aggravated assault. The unit also confiscated 147 guns as of last week, along with 339 other weapons, such as knives and bats. An additional nine arrests were for murder, though those killings didn't actually take place in the schools.

## Jurors in El Rukn trial will remain anonymous

Jury selection is expected to conclude Monday in the federal trial of 14 members of El Rukn street gang accused of using murder and threats to corner the market on illegal drug dealing on the South Side.

In an unusual move, federal prosecutors and defense attorneys have been picking an anonymous jury. The jurors have been designated by numbers.

Prosecutors took the unusual step in light of threats made against jurors during the 1987 trial of El Rukn leader Jeff Fort and several confederates. Several of the defendants are accused of shooting and wounding witnesses from that trial.