

## ***We were trying to rescue our loved one from a cult, family tells cops***

*City News Service , 10News Digital Team*

2:53 AM, Jun 6, 2015

2:13 PM, Jun 7, 2015

Three people who claimed they were trying to rescue a relative from being "brainwashed" by a religious group were arrested for kidnapping, authorities said Saturday.

The suspects were arrested after deputies performed a high-risk traffic stop to end a high-speed chase between two civilian vehicles in the Vista area, San Diego Police Sgt. Patrick Yates said.

The pursuit ended in the 1500 block of Foothill Drive at 5 p.m. Friday.

The pursuit began with four people in a van being chased by another vehicle with a single occupant, Yates said.

"I saw two vans flying out of the entrance of the Twelve Tribes commune. A tan van was just feet from a red van and the the red van's side door was still open," said neighbor Tim Harwick.

The first van included a 23-year-old man, a relative of the three other vehicle occupants, who they claimed they rescued from brainwashing at the Twelve Tribes Community Church, Yates said.

The three suspects arrested for kidnapping were Andrews Martinez-Manso, 51, Eliza Martinez, 25, and Robert Harry Matthew, 25, Yates said.

The father of the alleged victim first visited the commune last summer.

"I could feel the tension," said Christian Joubert, a friend of many in the commune. He says the alleged victim got married last August to a member of the commune, and tells us the man's father attend the wedding and wasn't happy about his son being part of the group.

But recently, there was an about-face: that father gifted the commune 20 live chickens.

Joubert now believes that was a ruse. He was told by commune members the father and other family members went to the commune for a planned visit and then forced the man into the van, prompting a commune member to give chase.

"He said he didn't even think. It's like your child being kidnapped. You want to give chase. This was his brother," said Joubert.

The Twelve Tribes Community -- with branches across the country - has been dogged by claims of oppression, racism, anti-semitism, which commune leaders reject.

"For my knowledge, there's no manipulation. There are no threats – do it this way or get out," said Joubert.

Joubert says the man, a commune member for nearly five years, is back with his wife who is due to give birth in two months.

The Twelve Tribes Community released a full statement to 10News. It reads:

We in the Community in Vista were very saddened by the situation that happened here at our home on Friday, June 5th. As we understand it, some of the family members of Robert Martinez, who is a member of our community, attempted to take him away forcibly against his will. This was a great surprise to him and to us, as we have had an ongoing relationship with the family and have opened our home and our hearts to them on many occasions since Robert became a part of our community almost five years ago. We are very thankful that he is back at home with his wife who is expecting their first child next month. We do not know of the motives for this action. Yet we are very sad because it is true as the proverb says: "A wicked person listens to malicious talk; a liar pays attention to a destructive tongue." (Proverbs 17:4)

Robert and his wife and all the members of the Community in Vista have come together of our own free will in what we believe is God's calling on our lives to live out what He commands in the Scriptures (Acts 2:44). We live as a big extended family because we love one another. We love to work together in our Yellow Deli, where many, many people in Southern California come and continually witness our life and our relationships. We are not hidden or inaccessible to anyone, including our family members. In fact we continually invite and welcome folks into our very special life. We have no ill will towards Robert's family, and have hope of reconciliation and greater understanding in the future. If anyone would like more information about the Yellow Deli they can see our website ([www.yellowdeli.com](http://www.yellowdeli.com)), or about our Community and beliefs ([www.twelvetribes.org](http://www.twelvetribes.org)).

The Twelve Tribes Community in Vista