



Two of three suspects accused in La Porte robberies nabbed

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Eighteen-year-old Caleb Refuge, left, and 17-year-old Austin Jean are two of the three suspects facing aggravated robbery charges after three businesses in La Porte were robbed during a three-day period.

Police have arrested two robbery suspects accused of terrorizing businesses in La Porte, but say a third one is still on the run.

Two Valeros -- one on Spencer Highway and another on Fairmont -- and a Whataburger along Highway 146 were held up during a three-day period.

Caleb Refuge, 18, and Austin Jean, 17, were arrested after a car burglary. Police also recovered a handgun and masks used in the crimes. They're looking for a third suspect, George Merritt Jr., 17.

Detectives say Refuge was the sole suspect in the robberies at the Valero on State Highway 146 at Main and Whataburger on State Highway 146. Detectives say during two burglaries, Refuge, who was masked, would approach the front counter, display a small handgun and demand cash.

In the third robbery, investigators say Merritt and Jean, along with Refuge, were responsible. In that case, an employee quickly triggered a panic mechanism which locked down the entire counter area and the suspects left empty-handed.

All three suspects now face a charge of aggravated robbery.

Anyone with information regarding Merritt's whereabouts is asked to call La Porte police at 281-471-3810.