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HOLLYWOOD COMEBACK: FILMING RETURNS TO SANTA CLARITA STREETS

MOVIES: 'SUPER CAPERS' IS FIRST FEATURE TO BE SHOT LOCALLY SINCE STRIKE.

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SANTA CLARITA -- A team of dubious superheroes is taking over a highway bridge this week in Santa Clarita in a sign that the local film industry, crippled by the recent writers strike, is bouncing back.

"Super Capers," an independent film starring a collection of old-time TV stars -- among them "Batman's" Adam West, "Gentle Ben's" Clint Howard and June Lockhart of "Lassie" fame -- is the first feature film to shoot in Santa Clarita since the three-month strike ended last month.

"They started coming back right away," Jason Crawford, Santa Clarita's economic development manager, said Tuesday of film crews. "We're seeing a lot more production around town now, thank goodness."

The industry generates about \$2 million a month for local businesses, which translates to increased sales tax revenue for the city. When the Writers Guild of America walked out in November, a year of record revenue was stopped cold.

"It's really good to have them back, particularly with the economy the way it is," Crawford said, noting other forms of revenue are slumping.

Along with "Super Capers," TV's "NCIS" is back filming in town and a number of TV commercials -- for Swanson's Hungry Man dinners, Dodge and Nike -- have been shot since the strike ended.

The feature film, also starring Tom Sizemore, Justin Whalen and Danielle Harris, tells the story of would-be superhero Ed Gruberman (Whalen), who must join a team of misfit heroes-in-training.

This week, crews are shooting a battle scene on the Golden Valley bridge, a four-lane route that spans busy Soledad Canyon Road. The bridge is a key

piece of a future cross-town highway, but because the road isn't complete, detours haven't resulted in traffic problems, city officials said.

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