



LOUISIANA DRUG GUARD

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Bogalusa Bandits Busted

Louisiana's Mobile Deployment Team wraps up extensive investigation with drugs, cash, cars, jewels and arrests.

BOGALUSA—The Louisiana Mobile Deployment Team recently eradicated a cocaine distribution center operation in Washington parish after an extensive investigation.

According to agents assigned to the MDT, the Bogalusa Mayor and Chief of Police approached a La. State Trooper, who was a member of the MDT, for assistance.

The trooper recognized that activities going on in Bogalusa were directly related to other investigations the State Police were working on.

As a result, MDT agents started building their case and developing leads to organizations in Orleans, Jefferson and East Baton Rouge parishes.

After receiving information from Tri-County Major Investigations team, (another HIDTA initiative), MDT agents realized there was a direct drug trafficking connection between Gulfport, Jackson and Hattisburg, Miss. and Bogalusa.

MDT agents used this information, along with other independently developed information, which led to the first of two Title III wiretaps.

Information gained from the four-month long wiretaps and a DEA surveillance in Houston led to a traffic stop in Lake Charles.

There, the suspected leader of the distribution ring was arrested with 7.5 pounds of cocaine, 25.5 pounds of marijuana and \$102,845 in cash.

After he posted bond, he returned to Bogalusa to resume regular drug runs to and from Houston.

“This type of information sharing among agencies is exactly what HIDTA hopes to facilitate,” Gulf Coast HIDTA Director Tony Soto said. “The possibilities are limitless when law enforcement agencies cooperate this way.”

The investigation came to a close in May when the MDT executed nine Federal search warrants, seven Federal arrest warrants and 11 seizure warrants for vehicles.

Total seizures for the investigation include: 11 vehicles valued over 328,000, eight kilograms cocaine, 26 pounds of marijuana, four weapons, assorted jewelry, \$107,845 in cash, four bank accounts, cashiers checks totaling \$24,000, 22 Federal and State arrests, seizure proceeding to cover \$800,000 in assets.

Agents from the La. State Police, Drug Enforcement Administration, United States Customs Service, Bogalusa Police Department, La. National Guard Counter Drug Task Force, and Joint Task Force 6 participated in this investigation.

“Without the concept of HIDTA Initiatives, investigations of this magnitude would not have been possible in an area, so distant from a major metropolitan city, where crime requires the majority of narcotic investigative efforts,” said Lt. Col. Ed Kuhnert, commander of La. State Police Bureau of Investigation.

Sgt Cory Speakman and Staff Sgt. Kristi Moon support HIDTA Task Force



Farmers fail to claim their crop

MINDEN—The harvest is in, but the farmers have yet to show up, despite a written invitation. Webster Parish Sheriff Ted Riser said his deputies are still looking for those who were growing about \$7000 worth of marijuana plants that police pulled in July.

Webster Parish deputies, Louisiana State Police and the National Guard covered 40 acres of Willamette Industries property just 16 miles north of Dixie Inn off US 371 in their search.

The National Guard sent up a helicopter with agents who are trained to spot marijuana plants from the air. Undercover state troopers and deputies then went after the plants.

The plants were set sometimes 50 to 100 yards apart. It was not an easy task to get to each plant. There was no path and the officers had to push through thick undergrowth and climb over fallen trees to get to each site.

The marijuana had chicken wire around the base of the plants with human hair scattered around the outside of the wire.

The officers said growers do this so animals will not bother the plants. The human scent from the hair apparently deters animals.

One officer left a message written on a note pad with the Sheriff's Office logo for the marijuana growers. It said, "Plant your stuff closer together next time. Call State Police or the Webster Parish Sheriff's office if you want the plants."

Capt Dallas Jones, CW4 Steven Hoskins, CW4 Richard Ragsdale, CW2 Tyson Swanson, SSG Keith Stoltz, SGT Jason DeBush, and SPC Mitchell Wells support R.A.I.D, Sgt. Anna Kiefer supports LSP North District

LAFAYETTE—A Dallas woman's trip to New York was interrupted by a La. State Trooper when he pulled her 1995 Dodge over on Interstate 10 for a traffic violation.

A subsequent search of the vehicle disclosed 23 pounds of cocaine concealed in the dashboard of the vehicle. The female was arrested and the cocaine and vehicle were seized

Staff Sgt. Leo Davis supports LSP West District Narcotics

MANDEVILLE—The driver of a 1988 Ford was pulled over by a La. State Trooper for a traffic violation. After a short inquiry, it was discovered the driver was a known narcotics violator and a resident of Mercedes Texas. A search of the vehicle disclosed 66 pounds of marijuana concealed inside the gas tank.

In an unrelated incident, a La. State Trooper stopped a 1999 GMC extended cab pickup truck eastbound on Interstate 12 for a traffic violation. The driver of the truck claimed to on his way to Long Beach Miss. from Houston. A search of the vehicle disclosed 155 pounds of marijuana concealed inside a speaker box in the rear cab area of the vehicle. The individual was arrested and the marijuana seized and the vehicle impounded.

Sgt. Shelby Joe Thomas supports LSP South District Narcotics

Positive photo nails escapee

The Shreveport Police Department's Street Level Interdiction Unit was contacted by Detective. Kritsmas from Rapides Parish Sheriff's Office about an escapee who fled from the Work Training Facility at Camp Beauregard in Pineville.

It was likely he would return to Shreveport to meet his girlfriend. Agents from SLIU, **Nikki Wilkinson** from the Criminal Intelligence Unit, and **Jeannie Thiels** from Rapides Parish NTF

worked together to provide a positive identification on the escapee before attempting an arrest.

Agents went to the residence where the suspect may have returned. A man, who looked like the photo, gave a false name to the officers.

With the aid of the color photo provided by the members of the Counter Drug Task Force, the man admitted to his true identity and was taken into custody.

The deadline for submissions to the Louisiana Drug Guard is the last week of the month. Send counterdrug news by FAX to 318-262-6647 or email to Shyobro@aol.com

Join the trend...have your Louisiana Drug Guard sent to your email address.