



LOUISIANA DRUG GUARD

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More than 875 people arrested in drug investigation

Operation Frost Bite provides chilly month for drug offenders

BATON ROUGE, La. (AP) _ Police arrested at least 875 people and issued more than 1,000 arrest warrants in a six-month drug investigation covering 55 parishes, the Louisiana Sheriffs' Association announced.

Most of the arrests were made during February in the investigation known as Operation Frost Bite, said Dale Broussard, director of the sheriffs' association Violent Crimes and Narcotics Strike Force.

Police shut down at least five homemade labs for manufacturing methamphetamines and confiscated weapons, cash, equipment and various amounts of drugs that range from several grams to several pounds.

"We're sending them a message we're going to run them out of the state of Louisiana. We're going to arrest them, and we're going to prosecute them," said Attorney General Richard Ieyoub.

Allen Parish Sheriff Hal Turner, president of the LSA, said total numbers for the operation, in-

cluding the costs, weren't available because police officers were still making arrests. Sheriffs did provide examples, though.

Police in St. James Parish arrested six men and four women in Vacherie and seized 33 grams of crack cocaine, \$5,000, a handgun, shotgun, rifle and assault weapon, Sheriff Willy Martin said.

Investigators shut down methamphetamine labs in St. Landry, Lafayette, Tangipahoa and Bienville parishes and seized about six pounds of cocaine in Iberia Parish.

Acadia Parish Sheriff Ken Goss admitted 65 percent to 70 percent of those arrested will bond out of jail within 24 hours and be back on the streets until they go to court.

Operation Frost Bite involved law enforcement groups from around the state, including 55 sheriffs' offices, local and state police agencies, anti-drug task forces, Ieyoub's office, the Louisiana National Guard and federal agencies.

Sgt. 1st Class Travis Stelly, 415th MI Battalion, supports the Sheriff's Association Violent Crimes Task Force.

Frost Bite's snowball effect

Arrests - 883

Marijuana
1389g @ \$10,476

Marijuana Plants
17 @ \$20,400

Crack
2888g @ \$53,110

Cocaine
3018g @ \$221,300

Meth Labs 8

Meth
22.5g @ \$2,310

Asst pills
226.5g @ \$2,100

Weapons - 12

First time black cocaine found in Lafayette

Three kilos of black cocaine, used by Colombian traffickers to evade detection from drug-sniffing dogs, has been found in Lafayette, a sheriff's official said.

The cocaine has a street value of \$300,000. Lafayette Parish Metro Narcotics agents found two men in possession of the black cocaine in their luggage after being pulled over in Lafayette.

Sheriff officials said this is the first time black cocaine has been found in Lafayette and possibly the state. The

cocaine is mixed with chemicals which results in the the drug having a black powder appearance. The cocaine is not sold in the black form, the color is extracted by using a solvent such as acetone or ether.

Aware of the trend, the Federal Drug Enforcement Agency had sent information about black cocaine to local law enforcement agencies.

Sgt Jason Escoyne, Co C, 199th Support Battalion, supports Lafayette Metro Narcotics

White gallon buckets contain white powder

When a La. State Trooper pulled over a Ford Explorer for speeding on I-10, he was able to stop a Ford Econoline van at the same time. The two Fords were traveling unusually close together. After the initial inquiry, it was discovered the two parties were traveling together.

The driver of the van allowed the officer to conduct a search of his vehicle. The state trooper discovered two white five gallon buckets in the back of the van. A total of 45.72 pounds of cocaine were inside the two vessels.

The driver of the Explorer refused to have his vehicle inspected, so a K-9 sniff search of the vehicle was conducted. The dog indicated to the scent of narcotics near the exterior of the Ford. A large sum of money was discovered along with a small bag of marijuana.

Along with the cocaine, four arrests were made and \$14,740 in U.S. Currency, were seized.

Staff Sgt. Leo Davis, Co.C 415th MI Batallion, supports LSP West District Narcotics

Cocaine, Ecstasy, Marijuana seized in arrests

It's been a busy month in Lafayette for members of the Metro Narcotics Task Force. Agents confiscated more than \$100,000 worth of narcotics in separate investigations. Agents seized 1.3 pounds of cocaine valued at \$58,000 and 12,000 in cash from a residence of a local man. Another arrest was made when agents purchased and seized 450 doses of the club drug ecstasy. Based on the pack-

aging and amount of drugs confiscated, this violator was probably dealing to distributors. And more than 12 pounds of marijuana was seized and two suspected drug dealers arrested after several investigations led the agents to these violators. **Sgt Jason Escoyne**, Co C, 199th Support Battalion, supports Lafayette Metro Narcotics

Small Towns get big help

The Louisiana Small Towns Program is funded by a grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration and conducted by the Governor's Office of Rural Development. The purpose of the program is to assist small towns in planning for their future. **1LT Donna Jones** assisted the program as part of the Resource Team in a visit to Cottonport. For three days, residents and community leaders of the town were interviewed and asked to discuss the following areas: education, economic development, community development and the drug situation in their community. The team's responsibility is to compile a report based on findings, assessments and long and short term goals. Recommendations are submitted to the Governor's Office of Rural Development. The Governor's Office then reviews the report with the Cottonport Small Towns Committee, who is then eligible for a sizeable amount of grant money to implement the recommendations.

Congratulations to Sgt Chad and Victoria McNeal on the birth of their daughter. Ali McNeal was born on Feb. 19th. She weighed 7 pounds 11 ounces and was 21 inches long.