



LOUISIANA DRUG GUARD

The Counterdrug Task Force Newsletter of the Louisiana National Guard

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Federal investigation nets 21 drug arrests

The first phase of a major federal investigation into drug distribution in Tangipahoa Parish wrapped up Wednesday with the arrest of two local men.

Dubbed "Northern Exposure," the investigation fetched a total of 21 arrests since August, said U.S. Attorney Jim Letton.

Two local individuals were charged with multiple counts of distribution of crack cocaine, according to a statement issued by the U.S. Attorney's Office in New Orleans.

Their arrests came as a result of a indictment from a federal grand jury handed down in New Orleans.

The task force was comprised of U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration agents, Hammond Police Department narcotics officers, and deputies with Tangipahoa and Livingston parish sheriff's offices.

Hammond police Detective Wayne Scivicque said the investigation, which kicked off in April, required intensive man hours and round-the-clock surveillance that included a court authorized, 30-day wiretap.

The investigation took a major turn with a November arrest of a local man, Scivicque said. Agents bought more than 200 grams of crack cocaine from him on four separate occasions.

Scivicque and DEA officials said they believe this man was responsible for controlling cocaine distribution in Tangipahoa Parish.

"As far as total quantity, we believe he was dealing in multiple kilograms per week," he said. "At one time or another, this organization supplied everybody."

Several individuals were indicted on federal narcotics violations on Aug. 31 and are in custody awaiting trial. The task force seized more than \$37,000 and several luxury vehicles from the prime suspect during the course of the investigation, Scivicque said.

From that investigation, came the arrests of three other local residents. The trio was charged with unlawful use of a communication facility.

On Oct. 9, agents also arrested four other Tangipahoa Parish men

and charged them with possession with intent to distribute cocaine. Agents allegedly seized 240 grams of crack cocaine from a vehicle owned by one of them.

Agents stopped the vehicle on Interstate 12. During a search of the vehicle, agents allegedly found the drugs attached to the top of the engine block of the vehicle.

"Without the assistance of the DEA and the U.S. Attorney's Office, this would not have been possible," said David "Chicken" Gorman, director of the Tri-Parish Drug Task Force.

"The people who have been arrested have all been a major thorn in the side of the community and law enforcement for the last 10 years," Gorman said. "This is a major disruption to a really significant drug trafficking operation in Tangipahoa Parish." ©The Daily Star 2002

Staff Sgt. Ron Mays, 236th Combat Communications Squadron supports the Hammond Police Narcotic Division.

Summer camp all year long

For 18 children, who were part of the 2001 DEFY (Drug Education for Youth) camp, the events aren't just confined to the summer months, they continue throughout the year.

On the nineteenth of January, the children and 10 mentors from the Louisiana National Guard and the U.S. Navy, were part of a field trip to the I-MAX Theater and the Audubon Aquarium.

The mentors escorted the children throughout the impressive aquarium on the banks of the Mississippi River.

The children learned about different species of aquatic and terrestrial life. They were also educated about the different organisms and particles that live in mountain regions, that are

used for treatment research, such as cancer.

DEFY is the successful program sponsored by the US Attorney's Office Weed and Seed Initiatives with its military partners.

Counter Drug Task Force member, **Spec. Charon Camarasa**, 415th MI Battalion, was instrumental in organizing the field trip. She located the mentors, made lunch arrangements, lined up transportation and booked the I-MAX and Aquarium for the event.

Other La. National Guard members involved with the field trip were Private 1st Class Corey Ellow with the 141st Artillery and **Staff Sgt. Todd Strelau**, Counter Drug Task Force and the 204th ATSG.

Rapides Parish awarded 100K grant

Rapides Safe and Drug Free School received a \$100,000 grant for drug prevention activities.

Staff Sgt. Shawn Krill was instrumental in developing, writing and submitting the grant proposal.

The Rapides Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools and its partners in education: the Louisiana National Guard Counter Drug Task Force,

Rapides Parish D.A.R.E., Inc., the Alexandria Family Playhouse, the Office for Addictive Disorders, Region VI, Extra Mile, Inc., Region VI and the Alexandria YMCA were awarded the 100K grant, for the implementation of CSAP's model program, the Fairfax Leadership and Resiliency Program at four of the parish high schools.

RAID helicopter available for static display

There is nothing like getting up close to a large impressive aircraft. For countless kids, these opportunities are far and

few between. **Capt. Dallas Jones** will review and consider any request for a setup at a school or function.

Ultimately, the only power to which man should aspire is that which he exercises over himself.

---*Elie Wiesel*

Police close three meth labs

PONCHATOULA - Three methamphetamine labs east of Ponchatoula were put out of business and seven people were arrested during a sweeping series of drug busts, said narcotics officers with the Hammond Police Department.

Officers received information that suspects near Ponchatoula, were processing the drug.

Police also seized all the precursor chemicals allegedly used to manufacture the drug, containers, tubing and a 9mm Ruger with laser sights.

The manufacturing of methamphetamine, also known as crystal meth in its most purified form, has become a growing problem for law enforcement.

Due to strong ammonia-like odors which are emitted during the "cooking" process, meth labs are predominately operated in rural areas.

One of the factors which contributes to widespread use and manufacturing is that most of the ingredients used to manufacture methamphetamine can easily be purchased over the counter.

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