



LOUISIANA DRUG GUARD

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Heroin users arrested in major New Orleans crackdown

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Police arrested 13 heroin users recently, most at their homes, in a continuing struggle against the spread of heroin in New Orleans, authorities reported.

“It’s unusual for law enforcement to go after drug users,” U.S. Attorney Eddie Jordan said. Buyers fuel the drug market and need to be reined in, he said.

New Orleans Police Superintendent Richard Pennington said authorities want to send a clear message: Drug users will be prosecuted.

Investigators tracked down the

13 users by phone conversations with 17 dealers who were arrested in mid-June.

They were still looking for four more users. In all, nine of the drug users were men and eight were women.

“We must hold drug users accountable,” Jordan said. The charges carry a maximum four-year sentence and a \$30,000 fine.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration and various police departments in the New Orleans area worked on the operation.

Indictments against all 17 users

were handed down Thursday in U.S. District Court. They were charged with contacting drug dealers and furthering the felony of heroin distribution.

Pennington said heroin is causing violent drug wars between gangs and that this plays a part in the sudden rise in the murder rate in New Orleans.

“It’s all tied in,” he said. So far this year there have been 137 murders, compared with 102 through July 31, 1999. Despite the increase, the latest midyear tally is the second lowest in 12 years. *Master Sgt. Paul Schulz and Staff Sgt. Michael Plaiscia support NOPD*

Mother, daughter arrested for drug distribution ring

ALEXANDRIA— Authorities seized drugs, cash, jewelry, and weapons from a local residence where a mother and daughter are accused of operating a drug distribution ring.

The two were arrested by the Rapides Parish Metro Narcotic Unit during a raid of the mother’s house.

They were each charged with pos-

session of marijuana with intent to distribute, possession of cocaine and Xanax, possession of Vicodin with intent to distribute, illegal carrying of a weapon with drugs and possession of stolen goods.

Narcotic officers seized more than 500 grams of crack cocaine, \$82,372 in currency, more than 180 grams of marijuana, 12,642 Vicodin pills, a large amount

of gold jewelry, two rifles and five handguns.

An official said the gold, including chains, ring and necklaces, weighed about 12 pounds.

Both women were booked into the Rapides Parish Jail. *Sgt 1st Class Yolanda Neal, Staff Sgt. Joe Price and Spec. William Dill support the Rapides Parish S/O*

Investigation wraps up with 55 warrants served

MONROE--- State and Federal officials served more than 55 warrants after an eight month investigation by Metro Narcotics and the FBI.

Items seized were: 16 vehicles, 20 weapons, over \$100,000 cash and an

estimated \$500,000 street value worth of cocaine and marijuana.

The warrants were served at the end of July with the help of Monroe PD, LSP Narcotics, West Monroe PD, FBI, and the U.S. Marshals.

Supporting these agencies are Sgt. 1st Class Cary Grant and Staff Sgt. Anthony Martin, Monroe PD; Sgt. Tara McLemore, LSP Narcotics; and Sgt. Shane Pipes, West Monroe PD

State Roundup

ABBEVILLE—Following a two-week investigation, the Vermilion Parish Sheriff's Office seized 23 marijuana plants located around the Theall area of the parish. The investigation is still ongoing and several arrests are expected. *Staff Sgt. Peggy Miguez supports Vermilion S/O*

NEWORLEANS—When the New Orleans Police Department Major Narcotics Unit boarded the Sunset Limited at the Amtrak Terminal in New Orleans, they hoped they may find some narcotics amongst the passengers. What they found was more than they had hoped for. A narcotics detector canine alerted on luggage belonging to a Florida resident. Inside the luggage were 12 pounds of cocaine sealed in air-tight baggies. The passenger was arrested and the cocaine seized. *Master Sgt. Paul Schulz and Staff Sgt. Michael Plaiscia support NOPD Major Narcotics Unit.*

CROWLEY—More than five pounds of marijuana was discovered concealed in the trunk of a vehicle stopped for a traffic violation on Interstate 10. The two Virginia residents were returning to Norfolk from Houston. They were arrested and the marijuana seized. *Staff Sgt. Peter Leger supports Acadia Parish S/O*

BOGALUSA—The Drug Enforcement Administration and a U.S. Marshall visited Bogalusa recently armed with a search warrant for a known drug offender. With the help of the Bogalusa Police Department Drug Task Force, the officers approached the target residence. The person the federal agents were looking for was not there, but the officers requested and were granted permission to search the premises anyway. The search uncovered what was allegedly 901 grams of powdered cocaine and a loaded 9mm pistol. Following the search, the target suspect was located and arrested for the drugs. *Sgt. 1st Class LaVerne Cook supports the Washington Parish S/O*

Mushroom hunters, gatherers arrested

COVINGTON—Four teenagers were arrested Tuesday afternoon after they were observed trespassing and admitted to collecting mushrooms known for their hallucinogenic properties.

Shortly after 4 p.m., deputies were called to Brewster Road after a witness reported seeing four people run through an area pasture. The caller suspected the four might be attempting to burglarize a nearby home, but responding deputies discovered a different purpose to their hike.

When questioned, the four produced a bag containing mushrooms. When asked why they were scouring for fungi, one of the males responded that "they make you feel weird and see funny things" - much, one supposes, like an Oliver Stone movie. Another of the men agreed with the assessment of the first, advising that a friend has told him the "high" from "shroom" was better than marijuana, as all the weed does is "make

you slow and hungry." Sigh.

All four were arrested for trespassing and possession of a Schedule I narcotic to wit: psilocybin.

Astute observers will recall that last year, deputies faced a rampant problem of young adults trespassing in Madisonville-area pastures in search of the potent mushrooms. Despite warnings that there are frequent extra patrols in the area with deputies looking for just such nonsense, and despite the fact that the narcotic-laced mushrooms grow in areas rich with bovine excrement, the youngsters apparently persist. And side effects notwithstanding, marijuana is also an illegal substance on which agents crack down, particularly during the summer when bored teens find polluting themselves the only interesting thing to do. *Taken in part from a press release written by James Hartman. Sgt. 1st Class Paul Tullier supports St. Tammany Parish S/O*

Undercover buys paying off with warrants

HAMMOND—Twenty street-level drug dealers, who allegedly sold drugs to undercover deputies during a five-week stint, are expected to be arrested in the coming weeks, said Hammond police.

In street-corner deals, the suspects allegedly sold small quantities of crack cocaine, or in some cases, marijuana, to Jefferson Parish Deputies from June to mid-July.

The deputies were assisting Hammond police through a grant from the Louisiana Commission on Law Enforcement. Police targeted troubled ar-

reas at the focus of complaints from community and City Council members.

The deputies never bought more than \$40 worth of the drugs at a time and most often bought small \$20 rocks of crack cocaine. The state grant supplied the funds to buy the drugs. The buys were made primarily on street corners in northwest Hammond. Hammond police will be arresting several suspects, one at a time, over the next few weeks. They will be charged with drug distribution.

Staff Sgt. Ron Mays supports Hammond PD

Hotel marijuana shop shut down

GONZALES—When uniformed patrol officers approached a suspicious vehicle parked outside a closed business, the deputies thought they smelled marijuana coming from the car.

They received permission to search the vehicle in question and discovered one pound of marijuana and \$2,500 from one of the occupants.

It was later discovered that a earlier deal had gone down in Vinton, La and 15 pounds of marijuana was brought into Gonzales.

Most of the marijuana was being sold from a local hotel room. So the following day, agents went to the hotel room and discovered another half an ounce of marijuana and \$3,900. *Sgt. 1st Class Michael LaPlace support Ascension Parish S/O*