



# LOUISIANA DRUG GUARD

The Counterdrug Task Force Newsletter of the Louisiana National Guard

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## *Troopers make \$5M stop*

BREAUX BRIDGE--- A State Trooper who pulled over a tractor-trailer carrying a load of watermelons through St. Martin Parish discovered more than \$5 million in cocaine tucked in among the melons.

The trooper made a routine traffic stop of the eastbound truck on Interstate 10 about five miles west of Lafayette.

The officer pulled the rig over to cite the driver for following too close, improper lane use and failure to signal land change, but grew suspicious during the stop.

Discrepancies in the driver's logbook and bill of lading

also raised the officer's suspicions, prompting him to request consent to search the 18-wheeler.

The trooper discovered a pair of cardboard boxes underneath the load of watermelons.

The boxes contained 125 pounds of cocaine. The cocaine itself was wrapped in plastic, covered with grease, pepper and carbon paper, and bound with duct tape.

The driver and three passengers, all natives of Columbia, were booked into the St. Martin Parish Jail.

*Staff Sgt. Leo Davis support LSP Narcotics*

## **DEFY graduates 36 cadets at annual camp**

JACKSON BARRACKS---The Drug Education for Youth (DEFY) held its annual camp this summer at the oldest and most historic battalion in the La. National Guard, Washington Artillery.

During the camp, the group was treated to a tour of aviation facilities, challenged by the ropes course, repelling and celebrated their accomplishments with a pizza party and a memorable closing ceremony.

Also, throughout the week, the kids received training in self-esteem, physical fitness, nutrition, democracy, frill and ceremonies, goal setting, first aid, gang awareness and citizenship.

DEFY is part of the US Department of Justice youth outreach program that uses military mentors to promote positive life choices, emphasizing drug resistance. The camp graduated 36 young people, after the five-day residential program.

## **Eight day week pays off with equal amount of cocaine**

NEW ORLEANS---The Louisiana National Guard assigned to the River Investigation Group of the U.S. Customs Service, supported agents in a controlled delivery of 8.8 kilos of cocaine.

The operation was long, but well endured for eight days. The arrest of three Colombian nationals and the seizure of a vehicle, a cellular phone and \$8,700 in

U.S. Currency was the result of the successful delivery.

The National Guard played an important role with their knowledge of hi-tech surveillance equipment and linguistic skills. *Sergeant First Class Carlos Torres, Staff Sgts. Belinda Medina, Walter Castillo, Tim Suberville, Alfonso Morales and Sgt. Richard Landry support Customs RIG.*

# The 3rd degree

## **Interviews with the people who make up the La. Counter Drug Task Force**

**Staff Sgt. Melissa Vosburg**, a six year member of the Counter Drug Task Force assigned to D.E.A. New Orleans, recently won top honors in a national Galaxy fitness competition.

### **How did you get started competing in national fitness competitions?**

*I started four years ago when I saw an ad in a national magazine. I just wanted to see how far I could go.*

### **And how far have you gone?**

*1996 Ms. Fitness Western Texas - 1997 Ms. Fitness Las Vegas First Runner Up - 1998 Fourth place Ms. Galaxy Ohio - 1999 12th place out of 92 competitors at the Ms. Galaxy Dallas. I use my married name, Melissa Flatau, when I compete. I use my maiden name, Melissa Vosburg, Military only.*

### **What does a typical competition consist of?**

*Half the points come from running a military- style obstacle course that has a 10-foot wall, 18-foot cargo net, monkey bars, hurdles and stepper grid that tests strength, agility and endurance, and the other 50 percent is a swimsuit competition.*

### **What's this about appearing on an episode of Baywatch?**

*I was one of 27 competitors selected from a pool of 140 girls to do an episode of Baywatch last year in September with Baywatch stars, Kelli Packard and Brooke Burns and guest appearance by George Hamilton (who, by the way, was super cool).*

### **So, obviously, you are driven by fitness and challenges?**

*Yes, one of the main reasons why I joined the National Guard was that I wanted very badly to attend and make it through Basic Training, do the obstacle course and acquire some discipline. Also, I am the female representing my unit at the Adjutant General's Annual Physical Fitness Contest maxing the test for the past two years (1997 - score of 333 and in 1998 - score of 338) I'll know this Saturday how I do for this year.*

## North Louisiana Troopers busy with arrests

SHREVEPORT—A joint task force investigation led to the arrest of a prominent gang leader in North Louisiana. The La. State Police, DEA, FBI, ATF and Webster Parish S/O executed arrest and search warrants that were the result of a two-year investigation into illegal drug trafficking and distribution networks.

The investigation led to the infiltration of the "59 Blood" gang members by undercover agents who purchased marijuana and cocaine from ranking members and subsequently initiated the downfall of the organization.

More than 270 grams of cocaine and 224 grams of marijuana were seized in the arrests. Approximately 20 members and associates of the gang were targeted.

MINDEN—Agents from the Louisiana State Police North District narcotics, detectives from the Webster, Claiborne and Bienville Parish Sheriff Office's and personnel from the Louisiana National Guard Counter Drug Task Force executed a search warrant in Minden La on a residence of three known narcotic dealers.

The warrant stemmed from a prior investigation and arrest dealing with the distribution of methamphetamine and the theft of property from different parishes.

Approximately 2 grams of cocaine, pills and an impressive trailer load of stolen property were seized.

ARCADIA—Two north Carolina men were caught carrying 24 pounds of methamphetamines because a state trooper saw their car swerve onto the shoulder of Interstate 20.

The suspect and his passenger were booked with possessing more than 400 grams of the forbidden drug and charged with conspiring to distribute the methamphetamine.

The trooper got permission to search the car and found a hidden compartment in the rear bumper. Inside were 16 bundles holding one of the largest hauls of methamphetamine state police have found on that highway.

*Sgt. Anna Keifer supports LSP North District Narcotics*

## Marijuana riding the rails in SW La.

LAKE CHARLES—A representative from an industrial chemical company reported to U.S. Customs Service that a large quantity of suspected marijuana was in a hopper rail car that was being prepared for loading.

A search of the rail car by members of Customs, State Police and the La. National Guard Counter Drug Task Force revealed eight large feed sacks and burlap bags inside the car. Further investigation led to the discovery of several large blocks of marijuana. Collectively the marijuana weighed more than 547 pounds.

In an unrelated incident, 3 packages of 36.4 pounds of marijuana were recovered on the shoreline of Holly Beach in Cameron Parish. The packages were supposedly dumped overboard as a result of a two-day marine operation conducted by Customs.

*Sgts. Martin Schulthess, Marco DeLeon, and Richard Landreneau support U.S. Customs in Lake Charles.*