



COMMANDERS MONTHLY

A MONTHLY REPORT OF OHIO'S TASK FORCE ACTIVITY

December 2009

Commanders Monthly serves as a vehicle for the Ohio Drug Task Force Commanders to share drug prevalence, monthly task force highlights, and trends in criminal activity within their jurisdictions. It is the hope that in sharing this information on investigations and arrests, task forces will be able to better determine trends and target the flow of illegal drugs and other criminal activity. The Ohio Task Force Commanders Association is funded in part with a federal Justice Assistance Grant.

December Narratives: Drug Prevalence and Monthly Criminal Activity

CLERMONT COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE

The unit continues to see a substantial amount of heroin, pharmaceuticals, cocaine and marijuana. During 2009, the drug unit arrested 246 subjects involving 322 felony counts.

COLUMBIANA COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE

Current illegal drugs prevalent in the Columbiana County Drug Task Force jurisdiction include heroin, crack cocaine, cocaine, marijuana and methamphetamine.

The task force is continuing to build cases on local drug traffickers in the county. They have continued to see a rise in heroin and prescription drug use and sales. Ecstasy is being reported as being available from time to time in the northern half of the county.

The Task Force served a search warrant and arrested a subject formerly from Pennsylvania for the sale of crack cocaine and Percocet.

DELAWARE COUNTY LAW ENFORCEMENT AGAINST PUSHERS (LEAP) DRUG TASK FORCE

The task force began the process of hiring a pharmaceutical investigator that will fill a much needed position for pharmaceutical diversion investigations. This hire will occur as a result of funding from the Drug Law Enforcement Fund.

Current illegal drugs in the LEAP jurisdiction include marijuana, cocaine, crack cocaine, heroin, and pharmaceutical drugs.

2009 proved to be an extremely busy and successful year for the Delaware County L.E.A.P. Drug Task Force. The drug task force ended the year with seven controlled buys utilizing



confidential informants, two controlled buys utilizing

undercover officers, and one buy bust. Those events lead to the purchase/seizure of approximately 11 grams of marijuana, eight grams of cocaine, 12 grams of crack cocaine, nine grams of tar heroin, and 15 unit doses of Roxicodeone.

FAIRFIELD/HOCKING MAJOR CRIMES UNIT

The drugs most prevalent within our jurisdiction are heroin, marijuana and methamphetamine.

The Fairfield-Hocking Major Crimes Unit conducted a joint investigation with the Hocking County Sheriff's Office on an indoor marijuana grow operation outside of Nelsonville, Ohio. Eight pounds of marijuana were seized along with approximately forty plants. The suspect was cross-breeding plants and producing his own hybrid seeds along with ones being shipped from Amsterdam. The total of indoor marijuana grows for the year is at ten.

GRAND LAKE TASK FORCE

Grand Lake Task Force has seen psilocybin mushrooms ground up and placed in capsules selling for three to four dollars per capsule.

The task force continues to see marijuana, heroin and prescription drugs selling in the area.

GREENE COUNTY AGENCIES FOR COMBINED ENFORCEMENT (ACE) TASK FORCE

On December 17, 2009 the Greene County Agencies for Combined Enforcement (ACE Task Force), the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, and other local agencies participated in the service of 12 search warrants. The search warrants stemmed from intelligence and evidence collected by the Task Force and other local agencies for more than a two year period. The focus of the search warrants served on December 17, 2009 addressed local drug traffickers that were selling illicit drugs in the greater Greene County area. All evidence obtained during the service of the search warrants



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will be compiled by the investigators and provided to the Greene County Prosecutor's Office for future charges. It is anticipated that several subjects will be charged. Evidence collectively seized during the service of the search warrants and the investigation included, but was not limited to, several handguns and long guns, approximately \$200,000.00, approximately 56 pounds of marijuana, over a kilogram of cocaine, several vehicles, and documents which linked the co-conspirators together.

The primary drugs of choice in Greene County are crack cocaine and marijuana followed closely by heroin and powder cocaine. Methamphetamine, ecstasy, oxycontin, pharmaceutical drugs, psilocybin mushrooms, and LSD are encountered frequently during street level undercover purchases of drugs.

LAKE COUNTY NARCOTICS AGENCY

The predominant street drugs in Lake County this month have been crack cocaine, heroin, and marijuana. Lake County Narcotics has made 13 controlled buys; conducted five search warrants; one consent search; and one interdiction stop. The interdiction stop resulted in the seizure of 35 pounds of marijuana. The result was one arrest in Cuyahoga County. This was a joint investigation between LCNA and DEA. Four search warrants were the result of a joint investigation between LCNA and Painesville Police Department where the suspects were charged with trafficking in marijuana and cocaine. LCNA is hearing about numerous individuals being involved in Oxycontin and Oxycodone abuse. It is predicted that heroin will continue to be on the rise.

The pharmacy diversion unit has arrested two individuals involved in doctor shopping in Lake and surrounding counties this month. They are working with TAG in dismantling an Oxycontin ring that will continue into 2010 with positive results thus far. This ring has the potential for prosecution at the federal level.

LAWRENCE DRUG AND MAJOR CRIMES TASK FORCE

Prevalent drugs within the Lawrence County area are prescription drugs, crack cocaine and marijuana. The Major Crimes Task Force continues to experience a significant problem of pain pills being trafficked. The source is pain clinics in Florida and pain management clinics in neighboring Scioto County.

Lawrence Drug/Major Crimes Task Force personnel and DEA authorities executed two search warrants as part of an ongoing investigation into a marijuana trafficking ring. The searches were conducted at a home and a business and resulted in a seizure of \$60,145.00.

In another case, a parcel shipment of marijuana was intercepted via a courier service. This investigation continues. During 2009, the task force became involved in more parcel mailings of marijuana than in previous years of task force operation.

LORAIN COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE

Heroin continues to be the number one problem in the Lorain County Drug Task Force jurisdiction. Other prevalent drugs include cocaine, crack cocaine and pharmaceutical drugs.

The task force made four separate arrests of persons involved in heroin trafficking. They assisted a participating department in investigating events surrounding a double homicide and provided an undercover officer to assist another participating department in the purchase of stolen guns. Four juveniles have been linked to a number of home burglaries and may be linked to additional burglaries down the road.

The Lorain County Drug Task Force was involved in an investigation involving a pharmacy technician who is believed to have stolen 180 Vicodin tablets from her employer. The task force was also involved in the interception of a package sent to an Oberlin resident from California. The package contained approximately 300 tablets of various prescription medications. The task force expects to indict an individual who was able to call a pharmacy 74 times and pose as a doctor. He received 7400 tablets of Darvon over a five year period before being caught.

The Lorain County Drug Task Force is involved in an active investigation of a local doctor who is suspected of prescribing various controlled substances to a patient with whom he was involved in a sexual relationship. Additionally, a local individual was indicted on numerous counts of trafficking in ecstasy.

MAHONING VALLEY LAW ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCE

The Mahoning Valley Task Force year end stats include: 77 defendants, 335 counts, 189 cases opened, 179 weapons seized and \$229,588 in cash and assets seized.

The productivity of the drug unit was down approximately 30 percent from previous years. The decline can be attributed to two factors. First, staffing had been reduced by 20 percent due to layoffs at a member agency. Second, a long term investigation initiated in August, 2009 will continue into 2010. The staffing problem should be remedied as stimulus grant funding was awarded to the task force which allowed two sheriff deputies to return. Further, stimulus money will also provide for the retention of two police officers who will be recalled by their home agency.

The MVLETF has a second component that provides a Crisis Response Team (SWAT) to a two county area. The Task Force CRT was activated 29 times in 2009 for various high risk situations. The CRT was deployed to Pittsburgh for the G-20 Summit and assisted the Secret Service during President Obama's visit to the area.

MEDINA COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE

The abuse of heroin appears to be on the rise in several areas of Medina County. Two heroin overdose deaths occurred in the past month. Several arrests for the sale and possession of powder cocaine were made in the Village of Lodi in the southwestern portion of the county. Purchases of Adderall and

Flexeril were made as well. Complaints for the sale of Oxycontin, and similar prescription drugs, continue to be received.

MULTI-AREA NARCOTICS (MAN) UNIT

Prevalent drugs in the MAN Unit jurisdiction include marijuana, cocaine, crack cocaine, methamphetamine and ecstasy. Prescription drug abuse is also widespread, especially Oxycontin, oxymorphone, Vicodin, Xanax, morphine and Klonopin.

Marijuana remains consistent. Crack cocaine is more prevalent than powder cocaine, and Oxycontin is very popular.

Arrests for December totaled 7 individuals. There were twenty-one new cases for the month of December along with eight searches and the discovery of two meth labs. Officers dismantled two indoor marijuana grows; one in the basement of a rural farm house; the other in a bedroom of the residence.

NORTHERN OHIO LAW ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCE

Cocaine, crack cocaine, marijuana, heroin, MDMA and pharmaceutical abuse drugs are prevalent in the Northern Ohio Law Enforcement Task Force (NOLETF) jurisdiction.

There has been an increase in outlaw MC activity relative to recruitment, meetings between clubs and intrusion by new clubs.

During the month of December 2009, the Northern Ohio Law Enforcement Task Force (comprised of local, state and federal law enforcement) initiated several investigations into traditional and gang related narcotics trafficking organizations. These multi-state trafficking organizations are operating in the Cleveland metropolitan area and are distributing cocaine, marijuana and heroin. NOLETF has infiltrated these organizations utilizing traditional investigative methods, informants, undercover agents and Title III telephonic wire intercepts. During December 2009, NOLETF continued to monitor an active Title III telephonic wire intercept, relative to an ongoing investigation, targeting a multi-national Mexican marijuana trafficking organization. On December 15, 2009, NOLETF and members of the Illinois State Police conducted a controlled delivery which resulted in the arrest of one suspect and the seizure of 160 pounds of marijuana. The investigation continues.

OTTAWA COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE

The predominant street drugs in Ottawa County for the month of December have been cocaine, crack cocaine, marijuana, heroin and prescription drugs.

The Task Force continues to see a rise in reports of prescription drug diversion and abuse. Opioid abuse is still on the rise along with reported diversion.

The Task Force assisted the Ottawa County Sheriff's Office with a search warrant for stolen property at a county residence. Over a half dozen stolen lower unit boat out-drives were recovered. As a result of this recovery and information obtained from the suspects, two people were arrested

and charged with numerous counts of Theft & Receiving Stolen Property. From this investigation, detectives acted on additional information and recovered numerous guns that were taken from a residential daytime burglary in Lucas County. This investigation revealed that several Ottawa County residents were fencing stolen items that included guns, lawn mowers, boat out-drives, outboards or whatever they could get their hands on to steal in and around Ottawa County. It was determined that some of the stolen items were sold locally and others were sold to a buyer from Tennessee.

The Task Force executed a Search Warrant at an Indoor marijuana grow at a Clay Township residence. Agents were assisted by the Clay Township Police Department and Ottawa County Sheriff's Office. Agents and officers recovered nearly 70 marijuana plants and an undetermined amount of dried marijuana. The attic area of a one and one-half story residence was converted into a grow operation. The attic contained marijuana plants in three stages of growth. Officers seized timers, lights, transformers, scales, dried marijuana and several long and short guns from the residence. Two of the handguns recovered were loaded and located inside the front entry door and were very accessible. Two persons were arrested and incarcerated.

SOUTHEAST AREA LAW ENFORCEMENT TASK FORCE (SEALE)

During the month of December, the SEALE Narcotics Task Force observed the trend of heroin sales and usage as the major issue facing the SEALE communities and surrounding areas. Detectives established several new cases involving heroin and cocaine and closed several cases that were under investigation.

Several controlled purchases of heroin were made from a dealer in Garfield Heights and Cleveland. The same dealer is already facing a several count indictment on a recent SEALE case for Aggravated Drug Trafficking of heroin. As a result of the controlled purchases, four individuals known to the task force will also be facing charges of aggravated drug trafficking with juvenile specifications.

After making controlled buys of crack cocaine from a local dealer, Detectives executed a search warrant on the dealer's residence. The dealer has since been utilized by the task force and a major out-of-state supplier is currently under investigation.

Utilizing a confidential informant, detectives made several controlled buys of cocaine from a local dealer who is well-known to law enforcement. After executing a search warrant on his residence, his supplier was identified and a second search warrant was executed resulting in seizures of cash, drugs, and electronics. Several other individuals were identified as well.

Detectives assisted Cleveland Police narcotics detectives with a controlled delivery of marijuana which resulted in the execution of two search warrants. The end result was seizures

of drugs and nearly \$15,000.00. Several individuals are facing charges.

STARK COUNTY METROPOLITAN NARCOTICS UNIT

Marijuana, cocaine, crack cocaine, methamphetamine and prescription drugs are prevalent in the Stark County Metropolitan Narcotics Unit jurisdiction.

The task force currently has an open case on a mid-level heroin dealer. Several purchases have been made and they anticipate concluding the case with arrests.

The task force has been assisting the Stark County Sheriff with two homicide investigations.

A controlled delivery of a package resulted in the arrest of two individuals and the seizure of over eight ounces of cocaine, two guns (one of which was stolen), and \$2400.00.

The task force assisted the Canton Police Department with providing surveillance and equipment to monitor thefts of scrap metal. An interception of a parcel resulted in the seizure of marijuana. Surveillance was provided for the Alliance Police Department regarding an on-going drug investigation.

SUMMIT COUNTY DRUG UNIT

Prevalent illegal drugs in the Summit County Drug Unit's jurisdiction include cocaine, crack cocaine, marijuana, heroin, methamphetamine, crystal methamphetamine (Glass), MDMA, GHB, ketamine, Oxycontin and other pharmaceuticals.

During November, interdiction efforts resulted in the seizure of twenty-three parcels containing marijuana with a combined weight of 324 pounds and a street value in excess of \$453,600.00.

TRUMBULL-ASHTABULA GROUP (TAG)

Marijuana, cocaine, crack, heroin, methamphetamine and prescription drugs are prevalent in the TAG jurisdiction.

The task force is not seeing any significant change in drug trends. Heroin and prescription medications are still the most serious predominant problem. The rise of drug complaints continue as area law enforcement faces staffing reductions.

U.S. 23 PIPELINE MAJOR CRIMES TASK FORCE

Drugs prevalent in the area continue to be crack cocaine, heroin, cocaine, marijuana, methamphetamine and prescription drugs.

On December 12, 2009, task force agents served two search warrants in Pike County and one in Ross County after purchases were made from Lonnie Goodling in Pike County. Search warrants were executed at Goodling's, his mother's, and his grandmother's residences. Agents found the mother has been traveling to a doctor in Broward County, Florida to obtain prescriptions. The grandmother had rented an apartment in Ross County being used as a stash house. Several prescription bottles of Oxycontin and Percocet were seized in Pike County

along with approximately \$1,500.00. Eight-thousand dollars and three handguns were recovered in the grandmother's apartment. One of the handguns was entered as stolen from a burglary in Pike County.

Task Force agents are continuing to purchase Oxycontin and Percocet on a daily basis.

WARREN COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE

Marijuana, cocaine, prescription drugs and heroin are prevalent in the Greater Warren County Drug Task Force jurisdiction.

Although the task force is working on large marijuana and prescription cases, heroin continues to come from Dayton into Warren County. Dayton residents set up sales areas in local hotels and disappear after a day's worth of trafficking.

The task force is heavily involved in two separate money laundering cases that will hopefully come to a close soon. These places are catering to large scale drug traffickers assisting in money laundering and other offenses.

WEST CENTRAL OHIO CRIME TASK FORCE

During the month of December, the West Central Ohio Crime Task Force continued to purchase heroin, marijuana, hydrocodone, cocaine, crack, methamphetamine, mushrooms, oxycodone and ecstasy.

The task force executed six search warrants, seizing several hundred guns, marijuana, prescription medication, mushrooms and cash. Of the six search warrants, two were for meth labs at two different locations which were being operated in conjunction with each other. Investigators dismantled a total of three labs; one of which had two active cooks being prepared via the one-pot method. Another lab was producing anhydrous ammonia for use in both locations. Two individuals were arrested and later released pending further charges by the Grand Jury. The task force also conducted a round up with the assistance of the F.B.I., U.S. Marshals Service and BCI & I. During this round up a total of 22 individuals were arrested on various Grand Jury indictments for drug offenses.

WESTSHORE ENFORCEMENT BUREAU (WEB)

West Shore Enforcement Bureau's street drug unit was involved in the prosecution of cases involving methamphetamine, marijuana and steroids. The pharmaceutical diversion prosecutions involved Vicodin, Vicodin-ES, Percocet, Roxicodone, Tussionex and Tylenol #3.

Trends remain pretty much the same with the exception of pharmaceuticals with forged prescriptions being passed throughout a large geographical area to include multiple county pharmacies of pick up.

The unit assisted Westlake Police Department with a mobile meth lab discovered during a recreational vehicle interstate highway (I-90) traffic stop. The vehicle was occupied by a male and female, both of whom are convicted felons, traveling from Washington to Rhode Island for a family holiday visit. A number of precursors for the Nazi method, including sandwich

baggies full of red-p, were seized. The couple also possessed meth in crystal form and personal use marijuana.



OTFCA Members Reporting in December 2009

Clermont County Drug Task Force

Coordinator Bill Williams

Columbiana County Drug Task Force

Detective Dan Downard

Delaware County Law Enforcement Against Pushers (LEAP) Drug Task Force

Operations Supervisor Detective Sergeant Randy Pohl

Fairfield/Hocking Major Crimes Unit

Commander Eric Brown

Grand Lake Task Force

Lieutenant Steve Stienecker

Greene County Agencies Combined for Enforcement (ACE) Task Force

Commander Bruce May

Lake County Narcotics Agency

Director John A. Germ

Lawrence Drug and Major Crimes Task Force

Commander Timothy W. Sexton

Lorain County Drug Task Force

Captain Dennis E. Cavanaugh

Mahoning Valley Law Enforcement Task Force

Lieutenant Robin Lees

Medina County Drug Task Force

Director Gary Hubbard

Multi-Area Narcotics (MAN) Unit

Major Douglas Engel

Northern Ohio Law Enforcement Task Force

Lieutenant Pat Stephens

Ottawa County Drug Task Force

Detective Douglas L. St. Clair

Southeast Area Law Enforcement Task Force (SEALE)

Detective Brian Byard

Stark County Metropolitan Narcotics Unit

Sergeant John Oliver

Summit County Drug Unit

Captain Hylton E. Baker

Trumbull-Ashtabula Group (TAG)

Commander Jeff Orr

U.S. 23 Pipeline Major Crimes Task Force

Major Randy Sanders

Warren County Drug Task Force

Commander John Burke

West Central Ohio Crime Task Force

Sergeant Matt Treglia

Westshore Enforcement Bureau (WEB)

Special Agent in Charge Jeff Capretto