

Search warrant upheld, Willard man goes to prison

The 6th District Court of Appeals in Toledo has upheld a search warrant that led to a 16-month prison term for a Willard man.

Lorenzo Nunez Jr., 29, of 214 E. Tiffin St., had his prison term suspended after he was sentenced Jan. 12 in Huron County Common Pleas Court. At the time, Huron County Prosecutor Russell Leffler said it was possible there wasn't enough information related to the six-month investigation by METRICH, a multi-county drug task force, that led to the Jan. 10, 2007 drug bust at the defendant's home.

Nunez arrived home after authorities conducted a "no-knock" search warrant, said Huron County Sheriff's Capt. Bob McLaughlin. He said detectives found a half ounce of cocaine in the basement of the residence.

Twenty officers conducted simultaneous search warrants at Nunez's home and another suspect's North Church Street residence. Authorities seized just under 10 grams of cocaine, \$1,000 in cash and scales suspected of being used to weigh drugs during the East Tiffin Street search. From North Church Street, officers confiscated a 22-caliber Remington long rifle, a compound crossbow, ammunition, a cell phone and scales.

McLaughlin, the county's METRICH contact, was involved with the raid along with the sheriff's office special response team and detectives from the Willard and Sandusky police departments.

Earlier, a confidential informant who had gotten drugs from Nunez and another suspect said there was a "huge amount of drugs" coming to Willard, so the officers searched both homes on an "either/or warrant," Leffler said in January.

Eight days after the drug bust, Nunez posted 10 percent of a \$15,000 bond and was released from the Huron County Jail. On Oct. 10, he pleaded no contest to possession of cocaine. Judge Jim Conway credited him with serving three months behind bars when Nunez was sentenced in January.

On Jan. 14 two days after being sentenced, Nunez was released from jail to the Lorain Correctional Institution, a corrections officer said.

He was sentenced Jan. 31, 2001 up to six months in a community-based corrections facility as part of his two years of probation for three counts of trafficking in cocaine. Court records further show Nunez also was fined \$750, had his driver's license suspended for six months and ordered to pay a total of \$300 in restitution to Willard police and the sheriff's office.

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