

Operation Derailed nails 6 suspects

FOSTORIA, Ohio - A major drug bust executed by the Seneca County Drug Task Force and six regional SWAT teams broke up a crack cocaine ring in Fostoria early Tuesday morning. Six people were arrested during simultaneous raids at dawn.

"Operation Derailed" took months to plan but only minutes to execute.

It all started at Fostoria's airport before dawn Tuesday morning.

Nearly 100 law enforcement officers from 13 different departments in four neighboring counties met before caravanning to six different homes in the city that were about to be raided.

Fostoria Police Chief John McGuire said the planning for these raids was intense.

"This has been going on for three-and-a-half to four months," Chief McGuire said. "It started with saturated surveillance and then to individual drug buys from 13 suspects. There are ties to Toledo and a local business in town."

At around 5 a.m. six different SWAT teams executed search warrants simultaneously. Law enforcement teams arrested six suspects and seized thousands of pounds of crack cocaine, cocaine, marijuana, cocaine, drug paraphernalia, criminal tools, and US currency used for drug money.

One person was charged with obstruction of official business.

The search warrants were signed by Judge Jay Meyer of the Seneca County Common Pleas Probate Court and Judge David Woessner of the Wood County Common Pleas Probate Court.

"We've been tackling this problem since 2006 and it's a message if you continue to sell narcotics here in Fostoria and surrounding communities your days are numbered," Chief McGuire said.

SWAT teams conducted raids at 739 Cherry St., 610 Columbus Ave., 245 Bricker St., 215 East High St., 1067 Carrie Lane, and 1095 Carrie Lane. Apprehended were 46-year-old Richard May, 28-year-old Tyree Carpenter, 22-year-old Andrea Hernandez, 39-year-old Eric Coleman Sr., 25-year-old Tara O'Dell, 30-year-old Chester Pettaway, and 31-year-old Antione McCoy.

May was arrested and charged with obstruction of official business; Carpenter was charged with trafficking crack cocaine, possession of criminal tools, possession of cocaine and citations were issued for dog licensing violations; Hernandez is facing charges of permitting drug use. The task force also charged Carpenter and Hernandez with child endangerment.

Coleman is facing charges of trafficking crack cocaine; O'Dell was charged with permitting drug use. Both are also facing citations were issued for dog licensing violations.

Pettaway, who had outstanding warrants for his arrest in Seneca and Wood counties, was charged with possession of crack cocaine. He is also facing child endangerment charges. McCoy was also charged with possession of crack cocaine and is facing child endangerment charges.

Additional charges could be handed down after further investigation into possible illegal gambling and dog fighting.

The Seneca County Drug Task Force hopes to make even more arrests in the next couple weeks and name the business that played a role in this ring.

Seneca County residents are encouraged to monitor their neighborhoods, Chief McGuire said. You are asked to contact the Fostoria Police Department at (419) 435-8573 or Anonymous Tip Line at (419) 435-4957.