

Cocaine, firearm, cash seized during drug bust this week in Marion

Marion County law enforcement officers seized cocaine, a firearm, and cash during a raid this week as the result of an investigation by agents from the METRICH-MARMET Drug Task Force.

According to a press release issued Thursday by METRICH-MARMET, officers from the Marion Police Department and deputies from the Marion County Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant on Tuesday at a residence in the 900 block of



Mount Vernon Avenue in Marion. During the search, officers discovered approximately 82.53 grams of cocaine, a firearm believed to be illegally possessed, and \$2,222 in cash.

Officers arrested Natwon M. McCravy, age 26, Marion, and Loralai E. Crawford, age 20, Marion. The third person at the residence was arrested on a warrant apparently not related to the drug investigation.

According to online records from Marion Municipal Court, McCravy has been charged with five counts of trafficking in cocaine, two of which are first-degree felonies and three of which are fifth-degree felonies; and one count of possession of cocaine, a first-degree felony. Bond for McCravy was set at \$100,000. A preliminary hearing for McCravy has been scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on Oct. 17 in municipal court.

According to online court records, Crawford has been charged with one count of trafficking in cocaine and one count of possession of cocaine, both first-degree felonies. Bond for Crawford was set at \$75,000. A preliminary hearing for Crawford has been scheduled for 8:30 a.m. on Oct. 17 in municipal court.

"This investigation resulted in a seizure of a significant amount of cocaine and a firearm," Marion Police Chief Jay McDonald said. "Detectives, officers, and deputies have made Marion safer by taking it and these dealers off the street. METRICH-MARMET and all of Marion law enforcement will continue to work with the community to combat the supply of these dangerous drugs and illegally possessed weapons that come into our neighborhoods."

According to an affidavit filed in support of the search warrant, METRICH-MARMET Det. Matthew Baldrige stated that detectives with the drug task force conducted a controlled buy using a confidential informant on Sept. 26. During that buy, detectives identified McCravy as the individual who sold the alleged drugs to the informant. The drugs were tested and positively identified as cocaine, according to the affidavit.

Baldrige stated that detectives conducted three more controlled buys using confidential informants on Sept. 27, Oct. 4, and Oct. 10 and each time McCravy was identified as the seller. The substance the informant purchased in each instance was tested and was positively identified as cocaine, according to the affidavit.

After executing the search warrant at the Mount Vernon Avenue residence on Oct. 11, detectives discovered a scale with some sort of residue on it and a box of baggies. In a room identified as Crawford's bedroom, detectives found "cash, suspected cocaine inside of a plastic sprinkler head, suspected ecstasy, and a safe in the closet." Inside the safe, investigators discovered "more suspected cocaine, more cash," and a handgun. Detectives also found three cellphones.

According to investigators, \$90 of the cash found at the residence was identified as the money detectives used during the controlled buys on Sept. 26-27 and Oct. 4 and 10.

"We will remain in the fight to rid this poison and if you deal in Marion County, continue looking over your shoulder because you may be next," Marion County Sheriff Matt Bayles said. "We will continue to stay vigilant in pursuing these dealers in the attempt to rid our community of the very poison that has taken far too many lives."

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