



METRICH Enforcement Unit

Information Bulletin

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36 Years Serving North Central Ohio Communities

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Two Wooster people charged in METRICH drug raid *Ashland County*

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Authorities charged two Wooster people on Tuesday involved in a METRICH drug raid on Sunday that ultimately led to the hospitalization of two county sheriff deputies after their exposure to what authorities suspect was fentanyl.

Kimberly Sutton, 38, and Brandon Price, 41, were charged with having weapons under disability, a third-degree felony.

The charges stem from a Sunday search from a structure on the 1400 block of County Road 1575, Ashland police said in a news release issued Wednesday.

Police seized 27 grams of suspected methamphetamine, 20 grams of “fentanyl/heroin,” two handguns and \$914 in cash.

Ashland police said the case has been forwarded to the Ashland County Prosecutor’s office for potential further charges, “pending lab results from the Mansfield Crime Lab.”

Assistant prosecutor Victor Perez declined to comment on whether the office expects to file additional charges.

Ashland attorney Matt Malone, who represents Sutton, said he expects additional charges to come. He said the prosecutor’s office typically files a charge that can survive a preliminary hearing.

“When the indictment is issued, that’s when the rest of the charges will come,” he said. “If (Sutton) had fenta-



nyl on her person, she could be charged with illegal conveyance into a detention facility or aggravated possession of drugs. I don’t know that to be true or not.”

Malone declined to offer additional details about his client’s case.

Price’s attorney Donald Wick, based in Mt. Gilead, was not immediately available for comment.

Incidental exposure to fentanyl

On Monday, the Ashland County Sheriff’s Office issued a news release that stated two deputies were exposed to suspected fentanyl they found in Sutton’s bra when dropped off at the county jail.

Ashland police notified the deputies of Sutton’s suspected possession of “fentanyl and other drugs” ahead of dropping her off at the jail, according to a news release issued by the sheriff’s office.

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Three jailed following Findlay drug search

Hancock County

Three people were incarcerated following a drug search in the 100 block of Ely Avenue early Tuesday morning.

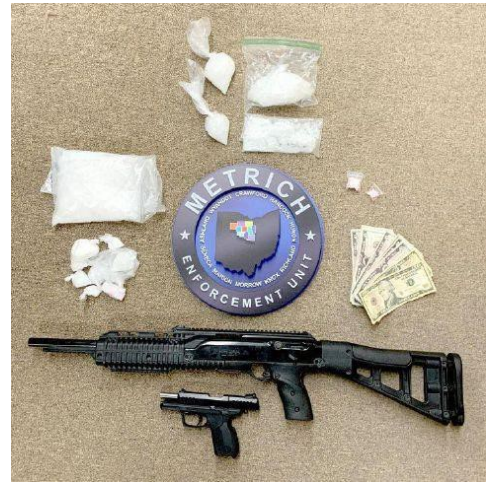
A press release from the Hancock METRICH Drug Task Force states that Jessica Lause, 33, and Dylan Skaggs, 30, both of 136 Ely Ave., and Shaun Eller, 41, of 820 Hurd Ave., were arrested and incarcerated on several outstanding warrants for various drug violations, drug trafficking indictments and a probation violation. The arrests came after METRICH and the Findlay Police Department Emergency Response Team executed a search warrant at 5:39 a.m. at 136 Ely Ave.

A search of the residence

yielded approximately 1.56 pounds of methamphetamine and just over ½ pound of suspected Spice (synthetic marijuana), along with a small amount of cash, drug paraphernalia and items indicative of drug trafficking, the release states. Two firearms, including one reported stolen from a Findlay address, were recovered as well.

The three subjects are incarcerated at the Hancock County Justice Center.

The case is still under investigation. Additional charges of drug trafficking, having weapons under disability and receiving stolen property are expected once the investigation is complete, the re-



port states.

Originally published in The Courier on April 19, 2022.

Man arrested after drug search in Wyandot County

Wyandot County

Law enforcement officers arrested a McCutchenville man Monday after a drug search at a Wyandot County residence.

According to a release from the Wyandot County Sheriff's Office, Zachary Hal Carlos Saldana, 26, of McCutchenville, was arrested and charged with felony possession of drugs after a residential search warrant was served at 7227 County Highway 2, McCutchenville.

The release states that the Wyandot County Special Response Team executed the warrant. The residence was searched by detec-

tives from the Wyandot County Major Crimes Unit, the METRICH Enforcement Unit and the Seneca County Drug Task Force. Detectives seized about 40 grams of suspected fentanyl, other items indicative of drug trafficking, almost \$10,000 in cash, guns and a 2013 Chevrolet truck.

Saldana is being held at the Wyandot County Jail, according to the release. Additional charges are pending.

The search was a result of an extended investigation into illegal narcotics in Wyandot County. Also assisting in the investigation



were the Wyandot County Prosecutor's Office and Wyandot County EMS.

Originally published in The Courier on April 12, 2022.

Crawford County Sheriff's Office search warrant nets drugs & cash *Crawford County*

The Crawford County Sheriff's Office along with METRICH executed a Narcotic search warrant at 760 Bel Air in Galion Ohio. The search warrant came at the conclusion of a several-month-long investigation into illegal narcotics being used and sold from the residence. The Crawford County Sheriff's Office was assisted by Galion Police Department.

Arrested at the residence were Donna Stall age 54 (Target of Investigation), Betty Stall age 75, and Julie Dudley age 54. Deputies

seized a large amount of suspected of methamphetamine, prescription medications, fentanyl, cash, and drug paraphernalia.

All three women are currently being held at the Crawford County Justice Center pending formal charges. Reports will be forwarded to the Crawford County Prosecutor's Office for review for all charges.

This case is still currently being investigated by Detectives from the Sheriff's Office.



Originally published on Crawford County Now Staff website on May 19, 2022.

Fentanyl bust takes thousands of deadly doses off streets *Marion County*

A drug arrest conducted in Marion on Sunday took substantial amounts of fentanyl off the streets. According to a news release issued by the Marion Police Department, approximately 120 grams of fentanyl were seized:

On April 3, 2022, law enforcement officers from the Marion City Police Department and the Marion County Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant obtained through Judge Teresa Ballinger for a residence in the 500 block of Delaware Avenue, Marion, after an investigation by detectives from the METRICH-MARMET Drug Task Force.

Detectives seized approximately 120 grams of fentanyl, \$7800 cash, and a stolen handgun.

According to DEA.gov, this amount of fentanyl is enough to cause 60,000 deadly overdoses. Kevin Guzman, 25, of Columbus, was arrested and charged with Trafficking in a Fentanyl-Related Compound.

This case will be forwarded to Marion County Prosecutor Ray Grogan for the filing of formal charges.

Marion Police Jay McDonald stated, "This is again a large seizure of a deadly drug that pollutes our community and steals the lives from the citizens we serve." Chief McDonald added, "With the Teamwork of the Officers and Deputies alongside the community, we are making an IMPACT." "I want to thank the officers and detectives involved in this investigation," said Marion Police Chief Jay McDonald.

Marion County Sheriff Matt Bayles said, "I am proud of the work and dedication of the METRICH-MARMET Task Force, Deputies, and Officers of Marion County along with the assistance from our community." Bayles added, "I believe that this seizure alone saved several lives, and we will not stop our efforts to combat this problem."



The METRICH-MARMET Drug Task Force is made up of members of the Marion City Police Department, Marion County Sheriff's Office, and the Marion County Prosecutors Office. Marion County citizens are encouraged to call in crime tips involving criminal activity to 740-375-TIPS (8477) or online at mariontips.org. Tipsters may remain anonymous if they choose.

Originally published in the Crawford County Now Staff April 4, 2022.

Upper Sandusky residential drug bust nets meth, fentanyl and guns *Wyandot County*

A large amount of drugs and guns were confiscated following a residential search warrant Friday morning in Upper Sandusky.

According to a press release from the Wyandot County Sheriff's Office, at 9:24 a.m. Friday, the Wyandot County Special Response Team served a residential search warrant at 527 W. Guthrie Street in Upper Sandusky.

The residence was searched by detectives from the Wyandot County Major Crimes Unit and the METRICH Enforcement Unit. Detectives confiscated a large amount of suspected methamphetamine, suspected fentanyl and guns.

Two people were in the residence when the search warrant was served, and the Upper Sandusky Police Department con-

ducted traffic stops on two vehicles that left the residence before the service of the warrant. They were interviewed by detectives and released. Felony drug possession charges are expected on these individuals.

The seizure of the drugs and firearms were the result of an investigation into illegal narcotics being distributed in Wyandot County. The Wyandot County Major Crimes Unit thanked the Upper Sandusky Police Department, the Wyandot County Sheriff's Office SRT, the Wyandot County Prosecutor's Office and the METRICH Enforcement Unit for their help in this successful investigation.

The seizure was the latest in a series of local drug stings that saw four residential search warrants



served March 25 in Upper Sandusky, recovering cash, firearms and drug trafficking equipment; as well as a residential search warrant served April 11 in McCutchenville, that recovered suspected fentanyl, nearly \$10,000 and resulted in the arrest of a McCutchenville man.

Originally published in the Daily Chief-Union on April 23, 2022

Tiffin man arrested in drug bust *Seneca County*

A Tiffin man was arrested following the execution of a drug-related search warrant Monday.

Seneca County Drug Task Force's METRICH Enforcement Unit, Tiffin Police Department and Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation executed the search warrant at 248 Second Ave., the residence of John M. Fonseca-Beck, 31.

The search unveiled a firearm, cash, suspected fentanyl, prescription pills, suspected psilocybin mushrooms, suspected crack cocaine, suspected cocaine and other items indicative of drug trafficking, according to a press release.

Fonseca-Beck was arrested on charges of possession of metham-

phetamine, a fifth-degree felony due to the amount recovered and having a weapon under disability, a third-degree felony.

Additional charges of possession of criminal tools, trafficking in methamphetamine, trafficking in fentanyl, trafficking in cocaine and trafficking in a schedule 2 controlled substance are pending lab results after the drug investigation concludes.

"The task force and the Tiffin Police Department had been receiving an enormous amount of drug intelligence from our road patrol officers and citizens' complaints addressing drug activity at this specific residence," Tiffin Police Chief David Pauly said. "This operation and the teamwork



that went into it shows that we stand as a united front against drugs in Seneca County."

Originally published in the Advertiser Tribune on May 17, 2022.

Two arrested in Marion County after investigation *Marion County*

On May 4th, 2022, law enforcement officers from the Marion Special Response Team, Marion City Police Department, Marion County Sheriff's Office, and the FBI (Mansfield Office-Cleveland Division) executed search warrants for a residence in the 300 block of Columbia Court and a residence in the 3000blk of Marion Waldo Road in Marion County after an investigation by detectives from the METRICH/MARMET Drug Task Force.

Detectives seized approximately 1,287 grams (2.83lbs.) of suspected Methamphetamine, 285 grams of suspected Fentanyl, 1,715 grams (3.78lbs) of suspected Marijuana, 94 Ecstasy Pills, four illegally possessed firearms, one of which had been reported

stolen and \$1335.00 in US Currency.

The following were arrested during the execution of these search warrants; Timmothy Russell and Kyle Rentschler.

Russell was arrested and charged with Aggravated Possession of Drugs, Possession of a Fentanyl-Related Compound, and Receiving Stolen Property. Rentschler was arrested for Weapons under disability. This investigation is still ongoing and additional charges may be filed against these suspects and others. This case will be forwarded to Marion County Prosecutor Ray Grogan for the filing of formal charges.

This is a great example of the teamwork among the agencies. A very impressive seizure that likely saved several lives in our community. I am proud of the hard work our Law Enforcement Officers put into these cases and am appreciative of the assistance from the Mansfield-Cleveland Division of the FBI said Marion Police Chief Jay McDonald.

Marion County Sheriff Matt Bayles said, this is a very impres-



sive seizure and another fitting example of cooperation between agencies. "I have said this several times and stand behind it, if you deal your poison in our community, your number may be next" Bayles added.

The METRICH/MARMET Drug Task Force is made of members of the Marion City Police Department, Marion County Sheriff's Office, and the Marion County Prosecutors Office.

Originally published in the Crawford County Now Staff on May 6, 2022.



Drugs and drug paraphernalia seized from Bucyrus home *Crawford County*

The Crawford County Sheriff's Office along with METRICH executed a narcotics search warrant at 1023 Tiffin St. lot 36 in Bucyrus, Ohio

The target of the investigation Michael L. Fletcher, age 35, was home during the search warrant and was arrested for trafficking in drugs. Michael is currently being housed at the Crawford County

Justice Center pending formal charges. Also arrested was Jennifer I. Williamson, age 33, also resides at this residence. Jennifer was released by Detectives, pending charges.

Deputies seized suspected narcotics along with drug paraphernalia and cash.

Reports will be forwarded to the Crawford County Prosecutor's

Office for review of charges.

This case is still currently being investigated by Detectives from the Sheriff's Office.

Originally published in the Crawford County Now Staff on May 27, 2022.

Two Wooster people charged (*continued from page 1*)

So “the jail staff prepared themselves with gloves and masks.”

“During the search, a baggie of white substance was found in (the suspect’s) bra. As deputies pulled the bag out, it tore open,” the news release read.

The deputies, whom jail staff declined to identify, were given doses of Narcan, a drug used to reverse the effects of opioid overdoses. They were released from the hospital later that day.

Sutton was also transported to the hospital, though she did not show signs of being affected by the drug and was returned to jail.

Ashland Police Chief Dave Lay said the reason suspected fentanyl made it inside the jail was because the two officers who arrested Sutton are males who “knew the narcotic was on the person of the arrestee in a location they didn’t want to go after.”

“They thought it would be more appropriate for a female jailer to do it,” Lay said.

There is disagreement between law enforcement agencies and the medical community on whether or not exposure to fentanyl through the eyes or skin, or by inhalation, can cause overdoses.

The federal DEA issued a

warning in 2016 to law enforcement officials across the nation that said “fentanyl can be absorbed through the skin or accidental inhalation of airborne powder can also occur ... Just touching fentanyl or accidentally inhaling the substance during enforcement activity or field testing the substance can result in absorption through the skin.”

The DEA’s warning went to say symptoms such as disorientation, coughing, sedation, respiratory distress or cardiac arrest can happen “within minutes of exposure.”

A year later, the Department of Justice issued a similar warning.

However, the American College of Medical Toxicology and American Academy of Clinical Toxicology said in an article published in September 2017 that “significant exposure to emergency responders is extremely low” because “incidental (skin) absorption is unlikely to cause opioid toxicity.”

The ACMT article said people can be exposed to fentanyl through the skin, inhalation or eyes. But an unprotected person would need to be exposed to fentanyl’s highest airborne concentration for nearly 200 minutes to

reach toxicity.

Further, “incidental dermal absorption is unlikely to cause opioid toxicity,” the authors of the article said. If the exposure comes through the eyes, the authors said washing them thoroughly would prevent toxic exposure.

Others from the medical community have warned that a misrepresentation of fentanyl’s dangers to law enforcement could “aggravate already elevated burdens of officer stress and burnout, while chilling lifesaving overdose response,” according to authors of another study.

Lay acknowledged the contradiction, and said “chemical substances need a mucus membrane to be absorbed by the body. So if you’re sweaty, or you have it on your hands and stays there when the skin absorbs it later, there are ways it can happen.”

The sheriff’s news release said the deputies “started having overdose reactions to the white powder.”

How the deputies were exposed to the suspected fentanyl, whether through the skin, eyes or inhalation, remains unclear.

Originally published in the Ashland Source on April 6, 2022.

Narcotics search warrant leads to three arrests *Crawford County*

On June 3, 2022, the Crawford County Sheriff’s Office along with METRICH executed a narcotics search warrant at 805 Sherman Street. The search warrant came at the conclusion of a several-month-long investigation into illegal narcotics being used and sold by the individuals residing in the trailer. The Crawford County

Sheriff’s Office was assisted by the Bucyrus Police Department.

Arrested at the residence were Macie Weiler, Levi Rowe and Zachary Stanley. Deputies seized suspected methamphetamines, heroin, Fentanyl, and drug paraphernalia.

All three individuals are currently being held at the Crawford

County Justice Center pending formal charges. A Report will be forwarded to the Crawford County Prosecutors’ office for review of all charges.

Originally published by the Crawford County Now Staff on June 3, 2022.

METRICH region collects more than a ton of expired Rx medication *Region*

North central Ohio authorities invited the community to participate in the Drug Enforcement Administration’s (DEA) National Prescription Take Back Initiative.

On April 30, the METRICH Enforcement Unit partnered with the Mansfield Division of Police, the Richland County Sheriff’s Office, the Shelby Police Department, Bellville Police Department, Lexington Police Department Community Action for Capable Youth (CACY), Richland County Solid Waste Authority, Richland Public Health, and the Richland County Mental Health & Recovery Services Board.

In addition to Richland County law enforcement agencies, numerous other law enforcement agencies from the METRICH region also participated. The METRICH region collected over 2,225 pounds of unused or expired prescription medication.

Community participation and commitment by all law enforcement agencies in the METRICH

region was key to the success of this event.

The following is a breakdown of all agencies that participated in this event.

Ashland County	
Ashland SO	276 lbs.
Crawford County	
Bucyrus PD	39 lbs.
Crawford County SO	162 lbs.
Galion PD	103 lbs.
Hancock County	
Hancock County SO	69 lbs.
Huron County	
Huron County SO	90.8 lbs.
Wakeman PD	48.6 lbs.
Willard PD	38.4 lbs.
Norwalk PD	320 lbs.
Knox County	
Danville PD	13 lbs.
Fredericktown PD	76 lbs.
Mt. Vernon PD	53.6 lbs.
Marion County	
Marion County SO/Marion PD	198.8 lbs.
Morrow County	
Morrow County SO	95.2 lbs.

Richland County	
Mansfield PD	131.8 lbs.
Richland County SO	41.4 lbs.
Shelby PD	56.6 lbs.
Bellville PD	34 lbs.
Lexington PD	21 lbs.
Seneca County	
Fostoria PD	83.87 lbs.
Tiffin PD	40 lbs.
Seneca County SO	135 lbs.
Wyandot County	
Wyandot SO	28 lbs.
Carey PD	13.2 lbs.
Upper Sandusky PD	57 lbs.



Originally published in the Richland Source on May 5, 2022.

Fentanyl found in Tiffin drug raid *Seneca County*

A Tiffin residence was raided by law enforcement officers Monday.

A drug-related search warrant was executed at 575 E. SR 18, Apt. C2, the residence of Tommy Hronek, Grace Fish and Allison Kiesel.

The search revealed cash, suspected fentanyl, criminal tools and evidence of drug trafficking and drug use.

Seneca County Sheriff’s Office, Tiffin Police Department and Seneca County Drug Task Force carried out the search warrant.

Charges of trafficking in fentanyl, permitting drug use, possession of criminal tools and endangering children are pending on the suspects involved after the conclusion of the investigation and laboratory analysis of the suspected narcotics.

“This search warrant is just another example of the multi-agency cooperation Seneca County law enforcement agencies currently enjoy. Together we will continue to serve these search warrants and root out the drug problems throughout our communities,” said Seneca County Sheriff Fred Stevens in the release.

Originally published in The Advertiser Tribune on June 21, 2022.

36 Years Serving North Central Ohio Communities



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METRICH (Metro-Richland County) Enforcement Unit is a ten county law enforcement task force created to address multi-jurisdictional violators of Ohio's drug, weapons, and organized crime statutes. The project operates with a basic "Community Policing Philosophy" using a "Weed and Seed Strategy" from ten "de-centralized" offices.

Participating agencies: Ashland, Crawford, Hancock, Huron, Marion, Morrow, Richland, Seneca, Wyandot County Sheriff's Offices and Prosecutors Offices; Ashland, Loudonville, Bucyrus, Crestline, Galion, Findlay, Bellevue, Greenwich, Monroeville, New London, Norwalk, Plymouth, Wakeman, Willard, Danville, Fredericktown, Martinsburg, Mt. Vernon, Marion, Cardington, Mt. Gilead, Bellville, Butler, Lexington, Mansfield, Ontario, Shelby, Fostoria, Tiffin, Carey, Upper Sandusky Police Departments; Ohio State Highway Patrol; Ohio Department of Public Safety; BCI&I, Ohio State Board of Pharmacy; FBI; ATF; DEA; IRS.

Points of Contact

Ashland County

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Hancock County

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