

## Marion Drug Task Force busts drug trafficker, seizes illegal substances and firearm

On July 28, 2023, a joint operation involving the Marion Special Response Team, Marion City Police Department, and the Marion County Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant for a residence on the 200 block of South High Street in Marion. The warrant, obtained through Judge Teresa Ballinger, followed an investigation conducted by detectives from the METRICH-MARMET Drug Task Force.



During the operation, detectives successfully seized a substantial amount of illegal substances and other incriminating evidence. Approximately 141 grams of cocaine, 263 Ecstasy Pills, and 47 Oxycodone pills were recovered, along with a stolen firearm and \$3000 in cash.

The primary suspect, Cherell McDuffie, a 36-year-old resident of Marion, Ohio, was apprehended as a result of this operation. Notably, McDuffie was already wanted for a separate unrelated warrant for felonious assault. In addition to this charge, he is now facing further accusations of Trafficking in Drugs and Weapons Under Disability. The case will be forwarded to Marion County Prosecutor Ray Grogan for the filing of formal charges.

Marion Police Chief Jay McDonald expressed his appreciation for the diligent work of the investigators in this case. He highlighted the fact that McDuffie, a wanted individual involved in drug trafficking, was also in illegal possession of a firearm. With his arrest, Chief McDonald affirmed that the community is now safer with McDuffie off the streets.

Sheriff Matt Bayles of the Marion County Sheriff's Office commended the recent achievements of the METRICH-MARMET Drug Task Force. Their relentless pursuit of justice has resulted in the removal of 31 drug traffickers from the streets of Marion. Undeterred, the task force continues to forge ahead in its mission. Sheriff Bayles emphasized that this latest arrest of a violent drug dealer underscores their unwavering commitment to apprehending those who peddle drugs within Marion County, with the intention of bringing them to justice.

The METRICH-MARMET Drug Task Force comprises dedicated members from the Marion City Police Department, Marion County Sheriff's Office, and the Marion County Prosecutor's Office. Their cooperative efforts demonstrate the strength and effectiveness of interagency collaboration in combating drug-related crimes in the region.

Originally published on the Crawford County Now Staff on July 31, 2023.