



NEWS RELEASE

COLORADO SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Joint Investigation Results in Multiple Arrests and Seizure of Machine Guns

Friday, June 13, 2008, 11:30 AM [RELEASE AT WILL]:

Beginning in November 2007, detectives from Metro VNI and agents from the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) initiated an investigation into reports that employees at Shrap Metal Tattoo located at 2928 Parker St. in Colorado Springs, were selling narcotics and firearms from within the shop. Over the next eight (8) months, undercover detectives purchased firearms, to include AK-47 type machineguns and quantities of high grade marijuana from employees and associates at Shrap Metal Tattoo.

On June 12th, 2008, approximately 100 law enforcement officers from the Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD), ATF, the El Paso County Sheriff's Office (EPSO) and the Teller County Sheriff's Office (TCSO), converged on locations in the city of Colorado Springs along with locations in Teller and El Paso Counties that detectives and agents had identified as being involved in the possession, distribution and/or manufacturing of narcotics and illegal firearms.

The operation commenced with a buy bust operation carried out by CSPD's Tactical Enforcement Unit (TEU) in the parking lot of the Citadel Mall. There, Clayson Pearce, age 27, was arrested on a Federal charge of Possession of a Machinegun, after he met detectives to sell three (3) AK-47 type machineguns and two (2) military style ballistic vests.

Once Pearce was in custody, ATF's Special Response Team executed a search warrant at 39 Kingston Circle, Florissant, Colorado, followed by a search warrant at 504 Calle Del Sol, Florissant, Colorado. An unspecified amount of currency, two (2) firearms, and a parts kit to manufacture an AK-47 type machinegun was located during the search at 504 Calle Del Sol.

TEU executed a search warrant at Shrap Metal Tattoo and located employee, Phillip McCall, age 35, was taken into custody for a Federal charge of Convicted Felon in Possession of a Firearm. An unidentified amount of currency, drug paraphernalia and one (1) firearm was recovered during the search. Ryan Middleton, age 27, was also arrested on an unrelated Failure to Appear Warrant.

TEU also executed a search warrant at 825 Valkenburg Drive. There, Jennifer McNeil, age 32, and Ralph McNeil, age 39, were located and arrested for distribution of hashish. During the search, detectives located an unspecified amount of currency, 41.9 grams of high grade marijuana, 61.8 grams of hashish, and 17.2 grams of psilocybin (mushrooms).

Narcotics detectives and COMMIT officers executed a search warrant at Precision Motors located at 316 East Fillmore Street. There they seized several items used to manufacture machineguns.

COMMIT Officers also arrested Shrap Metal Tattoo employee, Benjamin Vanorum, age 24, for his involvement in selling undercover detectives marijuana from within Shrap Metal Tattoo. He was charged with Distribution of Marijuana.

EPSO SWAT executed a search warrant at 30855 Vorenberg Road, Calhan, Colorado. The residence is owned by Shrap Metal Tattoo owner Shawn Jackson. During the search seventy-four (74) firearms that included two (2) machineguns and two (2) silencers were placed into evidence. Charges on Shawn Jackson are pending.

Photos of the arrestees are attached with this release.

This investigation was a joint effort that was successful due to the cooperation between the agencies involved which included:

The Colorado Springs Police Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, the El Paso County Sheriff's Office, and the Teller County Sheriff's Office.

Note to media: This afternoon between 1:30-1:45 PM, the 3 machineguns will be available for media viewing at the ATF Office located at 111 S. Tejon St. Suite 503.

Contact PIO for ATF is Carrie DiPirro at 303-710-7634.

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