

Sheriffs Department Seizes Over 800 Marijuana Plants

Tuesday, October 7, 2008



In a matter of less than a week, the Macon County Sheriffs Department has seized over 800 marijuana plants in three separate raids between September 30th and October 4th.

The first seizure, took place at approximately 6 a.m. on Tuesday, Sept. 30, in the Northeastern section of Macon County, where police confiscated and destroyed over 100 marijuana plants.

The following day, after receiving information from a concerned citizen that marijuana was being grown in another eastern section of the county, Macon County Deputies and Detective Bill Cothron responded to the location in question.

“A search of the property revealed that there were at least 72 marijuana plants being grown in small numbers in numerous patches,” said Cothron. “At that time the Sheriffs Department attempted to look for common pathways into the patches and there appeared to be walking paths that led to the plants.”

An investigation of the property also revealed several plastic jugs that police believe the suspect(s) used to water the plants.

After examining the area, police made the decision to “sit on the patches,” or stake out the area, in an effort to identify the person(s) growing the illegal drug.

Armed and covered in camo, the waiting game lasted for several hours.

“After waiting into the night, it appeared that the suspects wouldn’t be returning to the area and the Sheriffs Department decided to harvest the marijuana before it could reach Macon County,” Cothron stated.

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At around 8 p.m. that evening, Cothron and two Sheriffs Deputies began pulling the plants, loading them up on four-wheelers and taking them to the Sheriffs Office where they could be inventoried, documented and destroyed.

The following morning, police continued their investigation believing that more possible patches were located in the area.

During the follow-up search, six additional marijuana patches were discovered in the area.

Working in conjunction with the Tennessee Army National Guard Counter Drug Task Force, police confiscated over 500 mature plants, the tallest being 12 to 13 feet tall.

The departments used manpower and electronic surveillance attempting to establish owner responsibility for growing the marijuana.

“All the plants were mature and within days of harvest,” said MCSD Detective Bill Cothron. “We ended up, due to budget constraint, deciding to harvest it due to commitments of the Counter Drug Task force and the Macon County Sheriffs Department had to pull out.”

Cothron also noted that the main goal of the Macon County Sheriffs Department is not only to confiscate marijuana plants, but is to also apprehend those that are growing it.

“Sheriff Gammons has implemented a new approach in the eradication efforts of marijuana for the Macon County Sheriffs Department,” remarked Cothron. “Officers not only locate patches of marijuana but also identify the person(s) growing the marijuana so that they may be successfully prosecuted for not only producing illegal drugs, but for endangering the lives of Macon County residents. Attention is being paid to curtailing the distribution of drugs and protecting citizens and their property.”

In the past week more than 800 plants, worth an estimated street value of \$560,000, have been

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confiscated and destroyed in Macon County. The investigation is ongoing will continue through other parts of the county.