

METROPOLITAN BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1998

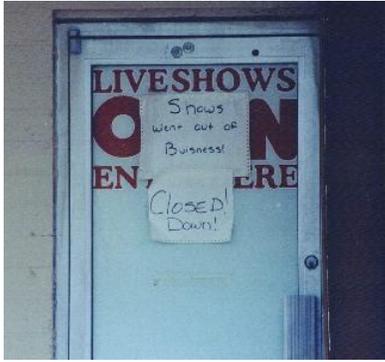


\$4.2 Million presented to MBI's Governing Board

The 1998 vice operations of the MBI were primarily focused on organized prostitution and fixing adult entertainment "broken windows" located on the Orange Blossom Trail. After more than a year of litigation against the MBI attorneys, the owners of S.O.B.T. Live Nude Shows finally agreed to permanently close two licensed businesses that had provided live peep shows for more than a decade. In addition, the adult entertainment clubs Bourbon Street South, Crazy Girls, and BG's, all part of a Central Florida chain of such businesses, voluntarily closed after extensive MBI enforcement actions against law violations in the businesses. A fifth club, Playmates, was also forced to close for a 30-day suspension period after MBI Vice agents documented illegal activities. Coordinated efforts are now underway to deal with another vice problem on the Orange Blossom Trail – street prostitution – with the OCSO, the OPD, and the MBI working as a coordinated team to develop new strategies for use in the coming year.

Other 1998 seizures by narcotics agents amounted to \$1,144,283 in cash and quantities of narcotics valued at \$7,173,289. MBI member agencies received an additional \$5,125,737 in seized cash, as a result of MBI investigations from previous years.

During 1998, the Division of Alcoholic Beverages and Tobacco (ABT) joined the 12 agencies already included in the multi-agency MBI task force. That new agency, like the others before it, enhanced the MBI's ability to investigate organized crime, illicit drug operations and other large scale criminal operations in Orange and Osceola Counties.



During the past 20 years, initiatives directed at organized criminal vice operations and establishments in Central Florida have made the Greater Orlando area one of the cleanest in the nation. Many of those vice establishments closed as a result of criminal charges or civil RICO actions, and the remainder voluntarily closed when it was clear that law enforcement was not going to permit illegal activities to go on undisturbed. So far, 18 body scrubs, 26 massage parlors, 9 adult peep operations, 3 adult theaters, 3 private nude dancing establishments, 3 private lingerie establishments, 6 commercial bingo halls, and 235 escort services have left Orange County, leaving Central Florida virtually free of those types of businesses.

Live Shows CLOSED

In addition, the MBI has also been instrumental in securing agreements from local advertisers not to publish advertisements for illegal vice businesses, seriously impacting the ability of criminal enterprises to remain profitable and in operation. In 1980, Orange County was home to 46 sexually oriented businesses. By the end of 1998, the number had been reduced to 17.

As the task force enters its third decade, the MBI remains committed to working in concert with area law enforcement to make the Central Florida area a safe community for all who live, work, and visit here.

William A. Lutz, Director
Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI)