

# ***METROPOLITAN BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION***

## ***EXECUTIVE SUMMARY***

***2004***

The Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI) Task Force has now completed twenty six (26) years of successful narcotics, vice, and organized crime enforcement. The teamwork of the MBI assigned local, state, and federal law enforcement agents, and the two state prosecutors, have continued the mission to remove narcotics, vice, and organized crime organizations from Central Florida. Adding to the effort in 2004 was the addition of the Eatonville Police Department as a new member and bringing the number of MBI contributing agencies to thirteen (13).

The Narcotics Section highlights of the year include a joint MBI, FDLE, and DEA investigation that led to identifying the top supplier to GHB organizations in Central Florida and many other Florida locations. Agents arrested a Pinellas County resident that was supplying Florida GHB distribution organizations with the chemicals to make more than 11 million doses of GHB having a street sale value of 111 million dollars. GHB, sometimes called the "date rape" drug, is commonly sold in individual water bottle capful portions at \$10 a dose. This arrest followed an eight (8) month GHB investigation called, "Operation G-2" which was a follow-up to the 2003 investigation called, "Operation What's Up G." Those two investigations led to 37 arrests and made a significant impact on reducing GHB distribution in Central Florida and other Florida communities.

Narcotics agents were also involved in an undercover investigation called, "Operation Frequent Flyer," with the DEA, ICE, and ATF, that was directed at airport employee smuggling operations. MBI and DEA agents worked undercover together to infiltrate the smuggling operation and made arrests in two different organizations engaged in smuggling narcotics and weapons past airport screening.

In addition, narcotics agents from the MBI, ICE, and IRS continued to pursue the assets of Jorge Farah who had trafficked in 80,000 kilos of marijuana and 400 kilos of cocaine. More than 19 million in drug

proceeds were gambled and lost at two casinos by the drug trafficker prior to his arrest. The U. S. Attorneys Office is assisting in the investigation.

The Vice/Organized Crime Section continued to keep the pressure on the vice industry in 2004. MBI Narcotics and Vice agents, with the assistance of the Florida Division of Alcoholic Beverages & Tobacco, conducted the investigation called, "Operation Overexposed" that involved illegal activities at Cleo's Gentlemen's Club, 1310 S. Orange Blossom Trail. Fifty four persons were charged with more than 350 vice related charges and additional charges were made involving 30 narcotics transactions at Cleo's Gentlemen's Club. 48 of the persons charged were employees of the strip club and 14 of those employees face narcotics charges.

The owner of Jerry's General Store, who calls her business "the nicest dirty bookstore in town," pled to 3 tax related felonies and 13 counts of selling and possessing obscene material. The owner still faces a hearing involving an assessment for up to a quarter million dollars by the Department of Revenue concerning unpaid sales tax, penalties, and interest.

Gambling slot machines began to appear in Central Florida in 2004 and the Vice/Organized Crime Section sought out the Florida distributor and sellers of the gambling machines, called Pachislo slot machines. Agents served a search warrant at a Fashion Square Mall business called, "Lots of Slots" and seized 56 illegal slot machines. The agents then determined that the distributor who was providing the slot machines was an import business in Volusia County. Working with the Florida Department of Law Enforcement and U. S. Customs & Border Protection, agents were able to stop the delivery of 1370 Pachislo slot machines from being distributed in the State of Florida. At this point it appears that distributors of slot machines are now more aware of Florida law and are not selling the gambling devices within the state.

In conclusion, despite the disruption of four Central Florida hurricanes and the office move of MBI to a new location, the agents and staff continued to persevere in their mission to remove narcotics and vice organizations and to keep Central Florida a great place in which to live, to visit, and to raise a family. The agencies that contribute to the Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation can be proud of the year's accomplishments.

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