

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2012 MBI Annual Report



The Metropolitan Bureau of Investigation (MBI) continued its mission to remove criminal organizations engaged in Narcotics, Vice and Organized Crime from Central Florida. The MBI Task Force unites local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies in a joint effort to combat these criminal organizations. The MBI member agencies for the year 2012 included: the State Attorney's Office for the Ninth Judicial Circuit, Orange County Sheriff's Office, Orlando Police Department, Winter Park Police Department, Apopka Police Department, Ocoee Police Department, Winter Garden Police Department, University of Central Florida Police Department, Osceola County Sheriff's Office, Florida Highway Patrol (FHP), Florida Department of Law Enforcement (FDLE), U.S. Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), and the U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), United States Postal Service, United States Secret Service, and the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Support Center (HIDTA).

In November of 2011, MBI Director Phil Williams retired. Assistant State Attorney Joe Cocchiarella was named as the interim MBI Director and a selection process was initiated to find a replacement for Director Williams. In February of 2012, the MBI Governing Board selected Director Larry Zweg as the new MBI Director. Director Zweg is a 25 year veteran of the Orlando Police Department and retired as a Deputy Chief when he accepted the position as MBI Director. During his 25 years at OPD, Director Zweg spent 11 of those years assigned to the MBI Task Force, where he was assigned to MBI as a Narcotics Agent, a Narcotics Supervisor, and the Narcotics Section Commander.

In 2012, the MBI Pharmaceutical Crimes Unit continued to obtain positive results in the efforts to confront the prescription drug abuse epidemic. Florida pharmacies and doctors sold more than 622 million doses of the powerful narcotic pills in 2010. That number dropped to about 498 million doses last year. Florida doctors purchased 97 percent less oxycodone in 2011 than in 2010. In 2010, 90 of the top 100 oxycodone-buying physicians in the nation were in Florida. Last year, the number dropped to 13. Agents continue to use the new state-wide Prescription Drug Monitoring Program (PDMP) that was passed into law to create a data base of prescription pain drug prescribers and users.

METROPOLITAN BUREAU OF INVESTIGATION

MBI also conducted several investigations of organizations that were forging and producing fraudulent prescriptions for narcotic pharmaceuticals. Those investigations led to several pharmacies in Central Florida at which the pharmacists were knowingly and illegally filling prescriptions without a reasonable belief of a medical necessity. Two of those pharmacies were closed, after their two pharmacists were arrested for narcotics trafficking.

The MBI Narcotics Section continued to work with local, state and federal agencies. MBI, FDLE, ICE, and the Orange County Gang Unit conducted an investigation targeting a violent criminal street gang, known as the Mohawk Boys or the Bloods. The Mohawk Boys were an organized gang that dealt in firearms, committed armed robberies, home invasions, and trafficked several narcotics to include cocaine and Oxycodone throughout the central Florida region for the past decade. The extensive investigation into the Mohawk Boys gang resulted in a total of (33) racketeering arrests of gang members, which effectively dismantled their criminal organization. Over 800 grams of Crack Cocaine, 500 Oxycodone tablets, (16) guns, and (8) vehicles with a total value of \$250,000 were seized.

Overall, illegal drugs valued at \$7,167,468 were seized as evidence, and removed from the community. Currency or money totaling \$4,132,672 was seized as evidence, with most of it as being subject to forfeiture. MBI agents arrested 153 drug dealers, 116 for mid-level trafficking offenses.

The MBI Vice and Organized Crime Section continued its efforts against organized prostitution and human sex trafficking. In 2012 the MBI Vice Section conducted 24 human trafficking investigations resulting in nine recoveries of juvenile and adult females and the arrests of ten individuals for human sex trafficking. The MBI has also continued to conduct training for local law enforcement, community groups, and others on the signs and indicators of human trafficking victims.

The MBI Vice Section continued their successful efforts against organized networks that distribute video slot machines throughout the state. All forms of illegal electronic sweepstakes machines were removed and, accordingly, the MBI jurisdiction is one of very few in Florida that are free of storefront casinos, (sometimes called internet cafes) that offer illegal electronic sweepstakes based slot machines. In 2012, successful investigations and prosecutions were concluded with convictions and forfeitures.

These investigations, and several other investigations which are mentioned in the sections reports, reflect the efforts of MBI member agencies to remove narcotics and vice organizations from the Central Florida Community and maintain the image of Metro-Orlando as a great place to live and raise a family and a safe place for families to visit.