

'Extensive' drug operation shut down

Three Marion residents were arrested Thursday morning after the execution of a search warrant in Galion that uncovered drugs, weapons, cash and other items.

The investigation, led by the Galion Police Department with assistance from the Crawford County Sheriff's Office, Bucyrus police, Galion firefighters and EMS and the METRICH Drug Task Force, put an end to what Galion police Chief Brian Saterfield called "an extensive drug-trafficking operation" at 539 S. Boston St., in Galion.

The three people arrested are awaiting formal charges. Crawford County Prosecutor Matthew Crall said those could be forthcoming by Friday morning.

In a search of the residence, officers seized more than \$3,000 in cash, a 9mm assault rifle, an Airsoft gun that appeared to be a real handgun, a large quantity of suspected heroin, other undetermined drugs, drug paraphernalia and surveillance equipment.

"A lot of hard work by our department paid off today. Our officers were able to blend citizen complaints, information on our TIPS Line together with officer observations and an extensive investigation into solid information that led to these arrests," Saterfield said.

"The execution of the search warrant ... should send a strong message to our community that all law enforcement in Crawford County is standing together in our fight against illegal drug activity."

Thursday's drug raid in Galion came 24 hours after another one in Bucyrus, the result of a three-month investigation led by the Crawford County Sheriff's Office.

That search warrant, executed Wednesday morning at 117 Fisher St. — a well-known drug-trafficking location, according to Bucyrus Police Chief David Koepke — also led to the arrests of three people. Gary Wayne Gallant, Andrea D. Sheppard and Tyler J. Fulton, all of Bucyrus, will be arraigned on drug-trafficking and drug-possession charges Friday afternoon in Crawford County Municipal Court.

The Bucyrus and Galion police departments, along with METRICH, assisted the sheriff's office in that drug raid. Heroin, syringes, cash and suspected stolen property were recovered in the Fisher Street residence.

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Guns, drugs, paraphernalia, cash and surveillance equipment seized during a search warrant at 539 South Boston Street.