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Ralph Obenberger
Sheriff/Coroner

MONO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE
PRESS RELEASE

Robert Weber
Undersheriff

To: All Media Partners

From: Jennifer M. Hansen, Public Information Officer

Date: January 24, 2014

RE: MONET narcotics investigation leads to several arrests

The Mono County Narcotics Enforcement Team (MONET), along with the assistance of the Mono County Sheriff's Office, the Mammoth Lakes Police Department, and the Inyo County Narcotics Enforcement Team (INET), concluded a narcotics investigation in the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

During the past couple of weeks, as part of a continuous narcotics investigation, MONET agents, along with the Mono County Sheriff's Office, were following leads regarding a local methamphetamine distributor around the Town of Mammoth Lakes. With information of a pending narcotics sale, MONET agents observed Juan Manuel Vargas Gutierrez, age 21, of Bishop, CA, meet with a female, in his parked vehicle, in a parking lot. The female purchased one ounce of methamphetamine from Mr. Gutierrez and his mother, Maria Socorro Vargas Gomez, age 39, also of Bishop, CA. The transaction was completed and Mr. Gutierrez drove away.

Mr. Gutierrez then met with a juvenile in another parking lot, outside of his vehicle, and exchanged six (6) bindles of methamphetamine to the juvenile. Mr. Gutierrez returned to his vehicle and drove away. Mammoth Lakes Police Officers conducted a traffic stop on his vehicle. Mr. Gutierrez and Ms. Gomez were placed under arrest and transported to the Mammoth Lakes Police Department without incident.

Upon questioning of Mr. Gutierrez, he stated he and his mother had driven to Mammoth Lakes from Bishop with the intent to sell and distribute methamphetamine. He stated he had provided methamphetamine to the juvenile before, as the juvenile helped Mr. Gutierrez distribute the methamphetamine. A search warrant was obtained for the resident of the juvenile where the six (6) bindles of methamphetamine were discovered and recovered from inside the handle bars of the juvenile's scooter. Juvenile probation was contacted and took the juvenile into custody without incident. A second search warrant was obtained by the Inyo County Narcotics Enforcement Team (INET), for Mr. Gutierrez's resident in Bishop. INET agents discovered and recovered additional methamphetamine, a digital scale, and additional packing materials from the residence. The total methamphetamine recovered from this incident was approximately thirty (30) ounces. Mr. Gutierrez and Ms. Gomez were transported and booked into the Mono County Jail in Bridgeport without incident.

Juan Manuel Vargas Gutierrez, age 21, of Bishop, CA, was arrested for possession of a controlled substance; possession of a controlled substance for sale; transportation of a controlled substance; using a minor as a selling agent; and conspiracy to commit a crime. Mr. Gutierrez is currently in custody.

Maria Socorro Vargas Gomez, age 39, of Bishop, CA, was arrested for possession of a controlled substance; possession of a controlled substance for sale; transportation of a controlled substance; and conspiracy to commit a crime.

The juvenile was arrested for possession of a controlled substance; possession of a controlled substance for sale; and transportation of a controlled substance.

All charges for this incident are pending with the Mono County District Attorney's Office.

Written and reported by: Jennifer M. Hansen, Public Information Officer

The law requires that arrest information be made available to the public. This publication may contain suspect information about individuals booked by the Mono County Sheriff's Department recently. Names of juveniles (under 18 years of age) are not public. Suspect information and ongoing investigation details are also withheld. Since most cases have yet to be adjudicated, all charges should be considered allegations. For questions/concerns regarding any information contained in this publication, contact Undersheriff Robert Weber at (760) 932-7549.