

Summer Sweep 2006 targets 31 individuals for everything from crack to heroin to ecstasy

By Jeff Haldiman

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Traffic around the Jefferson City Police Department was a little heavier than usual early Wednesday morning.

That's because at 4 a.m., 51 officers from the police department, Cole County Sheriff's Department and Troop F of the Missouri Highway Patrol started a narcotics sweep throughout the city.

Summer Sweep 2006 had officers looking to serve 31 warrants on individuals accused of using and dealing drugs, including crack, heroin, cocaine and ecstasy.

"Keeping track of some of these people can be difficult," said Lt. Rob Bucklew. "Addicts many times will

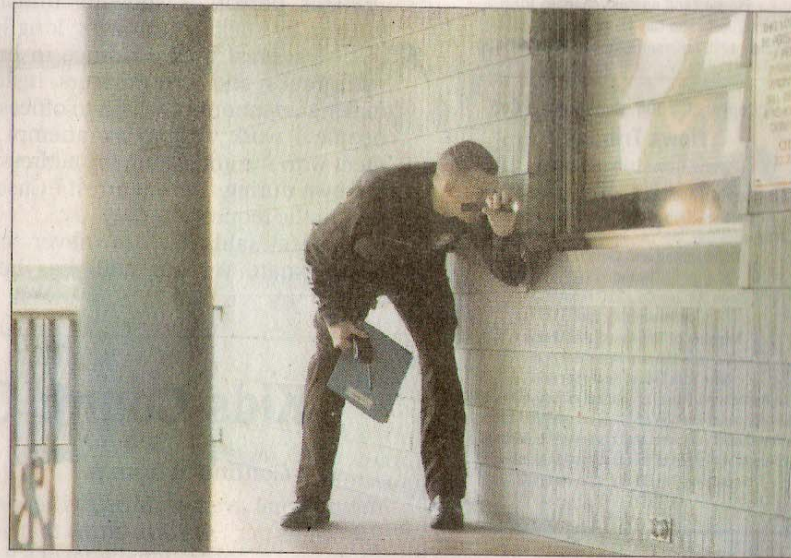
mooch off others for things like a place to stay."

Bucklew said having the Community Action Team in place has helped in trying to keep in touch with those who may know where these individuals might be.

The sweep was the culmination of more than a year of undercover narcotics investigations by the MUSTANG drug task force.

Officers were divided into teams and led by a sergeant. The information on the wanted subjects was distributed and each team was given a certain number of individuals to look for.

Before heading out, team members were briefed on what they might be facing when they went into these residences, including the pos-



sibilities of hidden containers where weapons or drugs could be stored.

"There's nobody in here worth getting hurt," Capt. Mike Smith told the officers before they left the police station.

"These aren't search warrants where we could forcibly enter a residence," said Sgt. Steve Weaver, one of the team leaders and head of the police department Special Response

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Drugs: 8 arrests, several already in custody

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Team.

"We have to knock on the door and wait for someone to open it before we can come in. A lot of these people know we are looking for them and sometimes they get tipped off by listening to a police scanner or someone calling them, but we still find that on these sweeps we can totally surprise suspects."

Reporters accompanied the teams as they went to residences.

The routine would have the officers go up to a residence and knock loudly to announce they were there. Most of the time, the officers had to knock several

times and they usually didn't get an answer the first time they went to the residence.

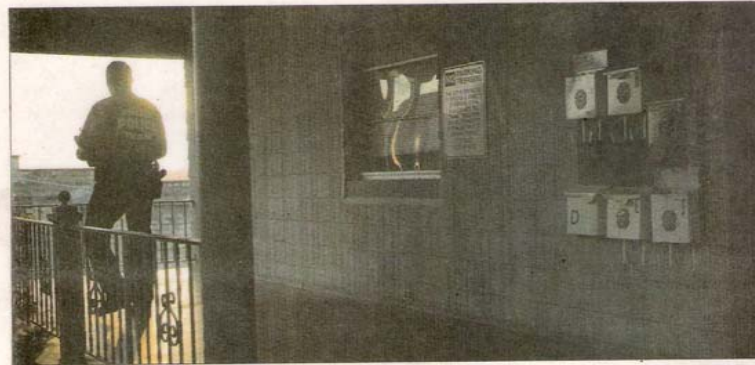
They had better luck on a second visit when suspects were waking up. Areas searched included across from the Jefferson City Public School's business office on Dunklin Street and streets around the old Jefferson City Correctional Center.

"Usually we get 50 to 60 percent of the individuals we're looking for during the initial sweep," Smith said. "After that, we'll probably get the rest through things like traffic stops throughout the rest of the week."

As of press time, eight people

had been arrested off the streets, but four individuals were already serving time in the Department of Corrections, two were already in the Cole County Jail and one was in the Boone County Jail. Officers also arrested one person found to have a warrant out of Callaway County and another was arrested for having a warrant out of Audrain County.

Authorities are continuing to look for people identified in the sweep and note that anyone with information on suspected drug use or sales should call the department at 634-6400 or the CrimeStoppers Hotline at 659-TIPS.



Sgt. Steve Weaver walks around a house looking for suspects during the roundup Wednesday morning.