CITY OF CONROE
2006 DRUG INITIATIVE

PROJECT SUMMARY

In late 2005, City officials walked door to door and met with residents, church leaders, and community leaders to begin a dialogue with citizens to hear their concerns regarding the neighborhood problems. Based on the results of the meetings, the 2006 Drug Initiative was created.

The 2006 City of Conroe Drug Initiative launched a citywide plan to reduce illegal drugs based on four premises:

- The public has the right to be secure in their homes and feel safe on city streets.
- Illegal drugs are a detriment to the community and a threat to future generations.
- Illegal drugs encourage other crimes including burglary, theft, robbery, and prostitution.
- Community involvement must be an integral part of program.

The City of Conroe has pledged to:

- Increase its police presence reflecting a high priority of eliminating drugs in Conroe.
- Conduct neighborhood meetings to interact with citizens.
- Conduct neighborhood walks to gain first hand knowledge of drug issues.
- Establish neighborhood watch programs in targeted drug activity areas.
- Place signage in targeted neighborhoods to discourage criminal activity.
- Partner with the Conroe Independent School District to increase drug awareness in local schools.
- Implement a juvenile curfew to reduce drug activity.
- Partner with Entergy to increase lighting to reduce cover for crime.
- Work with Montgomery County officials to enforce stronger penalties for drug offenders.
- Work with City Code Enforcement/Community Development Block Grant Departments to concentrate or eliminate sub-standard housing that could harbor criminal activity.
Statistics reveal the significant impact the 2006 Drug Initiative has had on crime as compared to 2005 statistics:

- A 21% increase in cases opened
- A 72% increase in the number of narcotics tips received
- A 34% increase in felony charges filed
- A 82% increase in misdemeanor charges filed
- A 78% increase in the number of felony arrests
- A 96% increase in the number of misdemeanor arrests

Texas Department of Public Safety statistics show an approximate 16.1% increase in the City’s population, to a 2006 total of 48,375.

Despite an increase in population, the number of crimes directly related to drug use and sales dropped as follows:

- Robberies decreased by 38.2%
- Assaults decreased by 33.4%
- Larcenies decreased by 16.5%
- Burglaries decreased by 8.5%
PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The City of Conroe encompasses approximately fifty two square miles in the center of Montgomery County, just north of Houston. Conroe is the largest city in the county. The Conroe Police Department is staffed with approximately one hundred officers. For the purposes of the project, the City (primarily inside Loop 336) was divided into four major geographical areas as shown below:

The southeast quadrant of the city, known as Dugan (red), is a predominately an African-American residential area. Dugan is known as an area where drug use, drug transactions, and prostitution are readily available.

The southwest quadrant of the city, specifically the area known as Milltown (yellow), is a predominately Hispanic residential area along with a mix of light industry and is second for drug related calls for service.

The northwest quadrant is a predominately retail and light business area. There is a mix of single family and multi-family residential areas in this quadrant. There are minimal drug related calls for service in this area.

The northeast quadrant is a predominately Caucasian/Hispanic residential area with scattered light industry. This area has minimal drug related calls for service.

Statistics show the southeast quadrant as the quadrant with the most calls for service which corroborates the anecdotal information received from citizens and community leaders.
Citizens Assistance Guidelines

- Be Vigilant! No one knows your neighborhood like YOU!! Talk to your neighbors along with using your eyes and ears to observe unusual activity.

- Support forming a neighborhood crime watch to partner with the Conroe Police Department.

- Work with code enforcement to eliminate abandoned houses and promote neighborhood clean-ups.

- Participate in joint meetings with the city officials and police to maintain quality communications.

Sincerely,
Mayor Tommy McCall

Narcotic Information Tip Guide Contact Numbers

It takes teamwork to solve these issues. To report illegal drug activity, please call the narcotic investigators at:

MONTGOMERY CO. S.I.U.
936-538-3299

TIPLINE CRIME STOPPERS
1-800-392-STOP

To seek assistance on setting up Neighborhood Watch programs or get a Crime Prevention speaker at an event or Community Meeting, call:

Conroe P.D. Dispatch
936-522-3203

Conroe P.D. Crime Prevention
936-522-3250
936-522-3326
or 936-522-3227

MAYOR'S
2006 DRUG INITIATIVE

Our Mission is to Protect and
Serve the Citizens of Conroe and
Exceed Their Expectations

City of Conroe
PROJECT ANALYSIS

Door to door walks and meetings between citizens, business owners, and the City Administration brought to light the following points:

- The drug problem and its related crimes were visible in all areas of the city, but more so in the southeast area of the city.
- The problem had been engrained in the community long enough that not only the known drug dealers had established a drug trade, but their children were following in their footsteps and the children now had criminal records for using and selling illegal drugs.
- Both the young and elderly, rely on family members who sell drugs to provide food, clothing, and shelter. In one specific case, a grandson who was a known drug dealer was allowed to sell drugs from his elderly grandmother’s residence because the grandson paid the grandmother’s utility bills and provided food for the grandmother. The grandmother lives on a fixed income consisting of only social security.
- The police response to the drug problem had remained unchanged in several years. Staffing in the Narcotics Unit had remained virtually unchanged in over a decade. Regular district patrols maintained visibility and were call responsive; however, did little to deter the problem.
- Citizens did not feel safe on the streets and were intimidated by drug dealers. Citizens also reported they feared retaliation from drug dealers if they reported the crime.
- Drugs were responsible for related crimes such as burglary, robbery, assault, and prostitution.
- There was a lack of communication between citizens and neighborhoods and City Administration.
- There seemed to be no incentive for drug users to enter into rehabilitation programs and even if there were incentives, there were no formal, low cost treatment programs available locally.

Meetings with patrol officers, narcotics investigators, and police administration revealed the following about law enforcement’s perspective of the problem:

- Street level drug dealers were visible at all times of the day or night.
- The drug problem in the neighborhoods consisted not only of the dealers who lived in the neighborhoods and sold their drugs, but the customers who came from outside the neighborhood to buy the drugs.
- Abandoned and dilapidated buildings fostered drug use and served as locations for prostitution.
- Drug dealers networked just like any business owner. They compare notes, know the narcotics officers by sight, and recognize the vehicles they drive.
- Little documentation had been done regarding statistics and trends with the drug problem.
- There was perception of lack of cooperation between law enforcement, prosecutors, and the justice system.
PROJECT RESPONSE

A ten point program was formulated. The plan reached out to the community as well as invited the community to participate in the plan. The plan included the following points:

1. INCREASE IN POLICE PRESENCE

Prior to August 2004, the Conroe Police Department Narcotics Unit consisted of two full-time investigators assigned to a multi-agency narcotics task force operated by the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Department. The task force was responsible for drug enforcement, vice enforcement, and other major crimes within Montgomery County. At that time, the task force consisted of approximately 12 officers from multiple agencies who covered an area of approximately 1044 square miles, in effect leaving only scattered enforcement efforts within the City limits.

In the last quarter of 2004, two additional investigators were added to the Conroe Police Department Narcotics Unit and the staffing remained at four until January 2006. Those four officers remained in the narcotics task force until the beginning of 2006.

In January 2006, two additional officers were added. During the first quarter of 2006, all six Conroe Police Narcotics Investigators were reassigned to duties within the City and are now responsible for approximately fifty-five square miles of City area. The unit currently consists of four plainclothes or undercover investigators and two uniformed officers. The two uniformed units are not call responsive and are dedicated to the narcotics enforcement mission. When not working in a support role with plainclothes investigators on surveillance or other operations, the uniformed units saturate “hotspots” and can be credited with making not only narcotics arrests, but also warrant arrests, and arrests for other crimes.
Tough on Drugs

Conroe Mayor Tommy Metcalf announces the 2006 drug initiatives for the city and gives an ultimatum to drug dealers at a press conference at the Conroe Police Department on Wednesday. Behind Metcalf are Conroe Police Chief Charlie Ray (from right), Montgomery County Sheriff Tommy Gage, Montgomery County District Attorney Mike McDougal and CISD Chief of Police Bill Harness (hidden behind Metcalf).

City to work with county on initiative

By Jamie Nash
Courier Staff

Conroe's Mayor Tommy Metcalf gave an ultimatum to drug dealers in his city on Wednesday. He did not wear a 10-gallon hat or a gun belt, but the event was held at high noon and in front of the police station.

Flanked by law enforcement and elected officials, Metcalf's message was clear. "If you're dealing drugs, you need to get out of town," he said.

Police Chief Charlie Ray acted as master of ceremonies. He reminded guests that Metcalf began to attack the drug problem when he took office in 2004 and vowed to continue the fight. "We will go forward with a renewed, reenergized initiative," Ray said.

As he pointed out some ministers in the crowd, he emphasized the need for community support. He also recognized school officials and Conroe ISD Police Chief Bill Harness.

Ray thanked the mayor and council members for their support, as well as the other law enforcement entities who work with the Conroe Police Department, which was a fitting segue for the mayor's message.

Metcalf began his address with a characteristically bold statement: "We're here to do a show of force," he said. A plan reminiscent of Metcalf's previous initiative was outlined, but there were differences he said would improve the results. He explained how the process would be refined.

"It will be a three-pronged process," Metcalf said. The three prongs are arrest, prosecution and sentencing, he said. A stern message was issued to anyone considering using drugs as well. He said first-time offenders would get a second change and have the opportunity to change their path. However, the mayor said repeat offenders would receive no such mercy.

"You're going to pay a tough price if
you're a repeat offender," he said. "The chief will be working closely with the District Attorney's Office."

Metcalf pointed out District Attorney Mike McDougal in the audience and said he was onboard. He further stated that the public should hold judges accountable for the sentences they handed down and hoped repeat offenders would receive the maximums allowed by law.

"We as citizens need to ask prospective judges if they're going to be tough on crime," Metcalf said. "If not, they don't need to be judges." He later said, "We just want them to do their jobs."

The mayor said he and council plan to follow the process through to the end now, meaning they will watch cases as they go through the system and remain aware of the prosecutions, verdicts, and sentencing. "We're going to monitor every 2 months," he said, "and see how it's working - that includes the prosecutions and the judicial system."

He praised Sheriff Tommy Gage and called him a friend and colleague.

In a show of countywide unity, Gage then spoke. He talked about the various law enforcement entities working together and mentioned the special investigative unit headed by Lt. Philip Cash.

"The Conroe Police Department is a big part of that," he said, "We don't just want drugs out of the city, we want them out of the county." He said together law enforcement would do something about the drugs in Montgomery County.

Chief Ray took the podium once more, saying the support from the community and elected officials was unprecedented. "I hope our efforts are rewarded," he said.

The group adjourned and everyone was invited inside the station for refreshments.

Code enforcement officers Joann Huffman and Tom Sivley showed their support by attending. Metcalf said they play a crucial role in the overall cleanup process for the City of Conroe.

"These two people are making a difference," he said. The mayor said the pair had helped rid the city of numerous dangers and eyesores in the form of abandoned vehicles and dilapidated houses.

"If you're not proud of your town, how can you get things done," he pondered. Metcalf said their efforts contributed growth in the community.

Huffman and Sivley praised other local law enforcement for working with their agency as well, including the office of Constable Gene Deforest who was also present.

Deforest said agencies were working together to make a difference in Conroe and that he believed he had seen tremendous improvement in the working relationship among agencies since he took office in 2001. "I'd like to see a safer Conroe for all to live in and raise children in," he said.

Chief Ray echoed what Deforest said. "I feel good about what we've done through this point and believe with the new initiatives we'll be able to make great progress in the coming year," he said.

Some of those present who were directly involved in the City's cleanup process were Sheriff Tommy Gage, District Attorney Mike McDougal, MCSO Captain Bruce Zenor, Precinct 2 Constable Gene Deforest and his Chief Deputy Steve Roper. There were numerous members of his police force present as well.

City Councilman and Mayor Pro-tem Duke Coon, and Council members Jerry Streeter, J. Ross Martin and Pat George attended the event, along with City Administrator Jerry McGuire and City Finance Director Steve Williams. Conroe Fire Chief Ken Kreger was also present.

The comments of all who spoke met with thunderous applause from the invited crowd. Most of those in attendance went into the station for refreshments and congratulations afterward.

Jamie Nash can be reached at jnash@mail.hcnonline.net
2.3. NEIGHBORHOOD MEETINGS AND WALKS

There were three neighborhood meetings held in 2006. Each meeting included the following events:

- **Neighborhood Walk**
  The Neighborhood Walk signifies unity between citizens, the City, and police.

- **Crime Prevention Displays and Neighborhood Watch Information**
  Crime Prevention Officers were available to discuss home security and personal safety. Information and registration for Neighborhood Watch Programs was also available.

- **Hot Dogs and Cold Drinks**
  Refreshments always create a good tie-in to a public meeting.

- **Interaction with Citizens and City Officials**
  These meetings allowed City officials and police officers to meet the citizens on their territory and listen one-on-one to their concerns. Not all comments were positive, however, it was a start to resolve long-standing issues in the neighborhoods.

The first meeting was held on March 2, 2006, in the Dugan area of the city at Washington Jr. High School. It is estimated that over 200 persons attended the meeting. The Neighborhood Walk covered approximately three-quarters of a mile.

The second walk was held on May 18, 2006, at Flournoy Park located in the northeast region known as “Madeley Quarters”. The meeting and walk attracted approximately one hundred people. The walk covered approximately one mile.

The third neighborhood meeting and walk was held on September 8, 2006 at Milltown Park in the southwest district of the city. The area is predominately Hispanic. Attendance was estimated at approximately 200.
Maya Grant, 9, and her sister Chelsea, 8, stood front and center while children from the Washington Outreach Program led the Pledge of Allegiance during Conroe Mayor Tommy Metcalf's second neighborhood walk as a show of solidarity in his 2006 anti-drug initiative. The other children who helped lead the pledge were Talisa Johnson, 11, D'Quan Hubbard, 7, Patricia Barrera, 13, Dion, 13, and Trevon, 14.

Mayor’s second neighborhood walk a success

BY JAMIE NASH
COURIER STAFF

The city of Conroe continues to make progress in uniting citizens to battle the drug problems in their communities.

Conroe Mayor Tommy Metcalf, city officials and police embarked on their second neighborhood walk Thursday evening at Flournoy Park to promote the mayor's anti-drug initiative. Children from the Washington Outreach Program made signs, marched and led the Pledge of Allegiance at the park, which is at the corner of East Davis and 10th Street. The neighborhood program, funded by the YMCA and the city of Conroe, gives children somewhere safe to go after school.

Jezebel Franklin, who is the site counselor and bus driver for the program, said many of the children in the program live with grandparents or other family members because their parents have drug problems. She hopes she can keep them from following the same path.

"If I can save one, I feel like I've done something," said Franklin, who was recruited six years ago by Conroe Police Officer Roosevelt Lasker, the program's director.

Franklin was preparing for the anti-drug and drug awareness week in the program when she learned about the neighborhood walk.

"The kids were excited," she said. The children who attended, ranged from 7-14 years old, and showed in their creativity in making signs with phrases such as "crack is whack."

Franklin is a fan of Metcalf's anti-drug initiative and said she knows first hand it has made a difference in the community.

"Thank God for Mayor Metcalf," she said. "He's definitely made an impact."

She said the atmosphere in the area had changed dramatically. Where there were once drug transactions occurring on the sides of the street, she and her mother now feel safe going for walks because of an increase in patrolling the area.

"I m glad for the police presence," she said. "It shows the community we..."
Walk

Continued from Page 1A

stil have some good officers.” Franklin believes the increased police activity, community involvement and getting children on the right path early will help turn around the community. She said the children in her program have made great strides in learning about the dangers of drugs.

“People told them marijuana would not hurt them. I read them the facts and told them it had a chemical in it,” she said. “I gave a prize for the one who could answer the most questions, and I ended up giving everybody a prize because they listened.” She normally takes them off the streets, but she was glad to walk the streets with them to send out a message to drug dealers that the neighborhood and those children would not be taken over.

Between 40 and 50 children per day participate in the outreach program and stay from 5:30-9:30 p.m. When school is out for summer, the hours will change to 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Donations and volunteers are needed. Anyone who would like to help can contact Officer Roosevelt Lasker at the YMCA at (936) 756-9345.

Jamie Nash can be reached at jnash@hcnonline.com.
4. SIGNAGE IN NEIGHBORHOODS

City Administration and community leaders met and discussed goals and formats for signage in the neighborhoods. It was decided the signs should convey a positive but firm message to those who read the signs. Another important message to convey was that this anti-drug effort was not just another police enforcement effort, but also a community effort and that the community supported these signs.

The signs were placed at strategic entrances and exits of subdivisions and neighborhoods where both residents and those visiting the neighborhoods would see that they were being watched by both the residents and police.

A major concern was that the signs would be vandalized or torn down by those being affected by the Drug Initiative. After a year of sending out their message, it is good to report that every sign that was erected is still intact.
Approximately two months into the sign program, an additional sign was added. The Conroe Police Department Narcotics Unit created a tip line for citizens to call in their reports of drug activity. A tip line sign as seen below was attached to each of the larger drug signs.
SAMPLE OF DRUG SIGN PLACEMENT

PROPOSED DRUG SIGN LOCATIONS

MILL AT I-45 EASTBOUND

MILL AT SANTA FE EASTBOUND

S. SANDRA AT URQUHART SOUTHBOUND

W. AVENUE G AT FRAZIER WESTBOUND

MILL AT FRAZIER WESTBOUND

SHADY GROVE AT FRAZIER WESTBOUND
5. PARTNERING WITH THE CONROE INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT

- In February 2006, Conroe Police Officers taught over 1000 freshman Conroe High School students about drug awareness and consequences.
- In March 2006, Conroe Police Narcotics Investigators assisted CISD and the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission in conducting an “alcohol sale to minors” sting at local convenience stores. Forty seven locations were visited resulting in eight arrests.
- In May, 2006, Conroe Police Narcotics Investigators assisted CISD Officers in performing a “tobacco sting” in the City of Conroe. Five convenience store operators were issued citations for selling tobacco products to minors.
- The CISD Police Department assisted in each of the neighborhood meetings and walks held during 2006.

6. NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH PROGRAMS

In addition to passing out information on the Neighborhood Watch Program at the Neighborhood Meetings, the Conroe Police Department provided information to local churches in the Dugan and Madeley Quarters area. Neighborhood Watch information is also provided on the local Public Access Cable Channel.

7. PARTNERING WITH ENTERGY

Adequate lighting on streets helps deter crime. During 2006, thirteen requests were made and Entergy responded by repairing or replacing the lights.
8. NUISANCE ABATEMENT

Conroe Police Narcotics Investigators worked with City Code Enforcement Officers by observing and reporting obvious violations of sub-standard housing and dangerous buildings that are or have been used by drug users or sellers.

Narcotics Investigators also began working with local motels in regards to renting rooms to known drug dealers or prostitutes. Motel management has been cooperating and a good rapport has developed with the officers.

Local convenience stores attracted Narcotics Investigator’s attention by selling items, that when packaged together, amount to narcotics paraphernalia. Investigators warned these stores to cease selling these “kits” or face possible prosecution for selling narcotics paraphernalia.

Narcotics Investigators mail letters to owners of vehicles, houses, or buildings explaining the legal ramifications of participating in or allowing others to use drugs or sell drugs in or on their vehicle or property. Under current seizure laws, it is possible to seize a vehicle or building if the owner is aware of the activity and has been previously warned about the activity. Copies of these letters are kept on file for future reference if needed.
9. WORKING WITH MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICIALS

In January 2006, Mayor Tommy Metcalf, met with prosecutors and judges advising them the Narcotics Unit would be tracking the following data:

- Dispositions of felony drug cases.
- Bond information on felony drug cases.
- Data collected on all drug offenses handled by the police department.

Prior to implementation of the program the private sector was asked to help with the program:

- Local news media outlets were contacted and asked to play a part in the program.
- Local businesses were asked to become involved in the program.

10. ESTABLISHING A JUVENILE CURFEW

Mayor Metcalf and City Council instituted a juvenile curfew. Both juveniles and parents can be held accountable for violations of the ordinance.
PROJECT ASSESSMENT

Project efforts were tracked during 2006 and because some statistics are still not yet firm, tracking continues into 2007. Quarterly progress meetings were held with City Administration, Police Administration, and Narcotics Unit members. Assessment of the project’s progress was tracked through the following methods:

- **Narcotics Arrests, Charges Filed, and Drugs Seized**
  An emphasis was put on both the quality and quantity of data tracked. Detailed information was tracked in 2006 and as shown below, some of the data was not tracked in 2005 or 2004.

- **Reduction in Drug Related Crimes**
  The Texas Department of Public Safety tracks felony crimes and reported significant decreases in felony crimes commonly associated with drug activity.

- **Population Change**
  While drug related crimes went down during the reporting period, the population of the city increased 8.8% from 2005 to 2006 and approximately 16.1% from 2004 to 2006.

- **Drug Related Calls For Service**
  A chart below shows the calls for service and the increase or decrease for each district in the project for the years 2004-2006. Calls for service increases can be attributed to two possible scenarios:
    1. Narcotics Unit Investigators opened more drug cases as a result of increased enforcement actions
    2. Citizens began to feel more comfortable in reporting drug activity as witnessed by the approximate 70% increase in leads that were reported.

- **Offense Tracking**
  Municipal, Misdemeanor, and Felony drug offenses were tracked to obtain an idea of exactly what types of drug problems were occurring within the city. Associated crimes identified during narcotics investigations were also tracked.

- **Felony Case Disposition Tracking**
  Prosecutors and Judges were held accountable through tracking of felony drug offense dispositions. Numerous cases of what appeared to lenient sentences and plea bargains were discussed with prosecutors and judges in October 2006. Dispositions received after October 1, 2006 were tracked to see if any changes had been made.

As a result, the District Attorney’s Office created a guideline stating suspects charged with distribution of narcotics would not be eligible for probation in plea bargains.
After the October discussion, a trend of assessing at least a minimal amount of jail time either in county jail or in a state jail or penitentiary was observed. The average sentence assessed ranged from six months to one year.

- **Felony Bond Dispositions**
  Bonds on charges greater than Municipal charges are set by a group of magistrates appointed by the State District Court Administrative Judge. There was an appearance of inconsistency in the way bonds were being determined for drug charges. Known drug offenders with previous history and those awaiting trial on previous charges were also being released back into the community as a result of low or inconsistent bonds.

  Through cooperation with the magistrates, prosecutors, and arresting officers, bonds have become more consistent and notice is being taken on repeat drug offenders. Arresting officers are including more information on their arrest reports showing the history of the suspect and his/her history of drug use or sales.

  Jail overcrowding created a problem with bonding procedures in that when the jail was over capacity, bonds were automatically reduced to make space in the jail.

As the project progressed, changes needed to be made to adapt to the changing circumstances:

- While one of the goals of the project was to rid the street corners of drug dealers, it soon became harder to accomplish as dealers moved off of the streets and into residences to sell their drugs. This forced clients to come inside the residence to buy. Another tactic used was to force clients to ingest their drugs inside the residence, making it less likely for officers to arrest the clients for possession charges when they leave the residence.

- It was also noted that drug dealers, specifically “crack cocaine” dealers, moved out of residences and began using local motels in which to “cook” their cocaine. This created another problem in that narcotics investigators had to start directing their attention to the local motels as crimes such as prostitution, assaults, and thefts began to occur.
### ARRESTS, CHARGES FILED, AND DRUGS SEIZED

**CONROE POLICE DEPARTMENT**  
**NARCOTICS STATISTICS 2004-2006**

*ASTERIKS INDICATE DATA WAS NOT CAPTURED*

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### REDUCTION IN MAJOR CRIMES

#### MAJOR CRIMES BY CATEGORY

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<th>% CHANGE</th>
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<th>% CHANGE</th>
<th>2006</th>
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### CITY OF CONROE POPULATION

#### CITY OF CONROE POPULATION BY YEAR 2004-2006

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### DRUG RELATED CALLS FOR SERVICE BY YEAR

#### DRUG RELATED CALLS FOR SERVICE 2004-2006

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<td>Southeast District (D)</td>
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2006 OFFENSE TRACKING MONTHLY REPORT

**FELONY**

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**MISDEMEANOR**

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**MUNICIPAL**

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**PATROL INITIATED**

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## 2006 CASE DISPOSITIONS
**BY COURT AND ATTORNEY PRIOR TO OCTOBER 1, 2006 (9TH DISTRICT COURT)**

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<th>DATE DISPOSED</th>
<th>DISPOSITION</th>
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<tr>
<td>Wilson, James Timothy</td>
<td>PCSF</td>
<td>02/02/06</td>
<td>08/03/06</td>
<td>Pled Guilty, 4 years Deferred Adjudication</td>
<td>Dournburg, Brent</td>
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<tr>
<td>Massie, Kenneth Dewanye</td>
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<td>02/02/06</td>
<td>09-21-06</td>
<td>Pled Guilty Sentenced to 1 Year in County Jail</td>
<td>Simon, Stephen</td>
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<td>Stewart, Robert Ed</td>
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<td>02/04/06</td>
<td>DISMISSED</td>
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<td>Taylor, Darrian L.</td>
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<td>08/14/06</td>
<td>Suspect under indictment on 4 Possession Cont. Substance</td>
<td>Burns, Brian</td>
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<td>Count 1: PCSF</td>
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<td>Count 2: PCSF</td>
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<td>Count 3: PCSF</td>
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<td>Count 4: PCSF</td>
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<td>Counts 1 and 2 dismissed by State. Suspect plead guilty to counts 3 and 4 and received 8 years TDC.</td>
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<td>Lopez, Nava Emerito</td>
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<td>11-02-06</td>
<td>Pled Guilty Sentenced to 6 months in County Jail</td>
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<td>Boone, Buford</td>
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<td>01-25-07</td>
<td>Pled guilty, received 6 months TDC</td>
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<td>Harrell, Carlos Ray Jr.</td>
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<td>Franklin, Dakadro Wesley</td>
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<td>02/23/06</td>
<td>09/14/06</td>
<td>Suspect indicted on two counts:</td>
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<td>Count 1: Possession Controlled Substance indictment number 06-05-04445</td>
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<td>Count 2: Felony Fleeing in a Motor Vehicle</td>
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<td>Count 2 dismissed in plea bargain; suspect plead guilty to judge and received 15 years TDC</td>
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<td>Price, Amber Lavette</td>
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<td>10/03/06</td>
<td>State's Motion / Dismissed in the interest of Justice.</td>
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<td>Montiel, Jose Luis</td>
<td>DCSF</td>
<td>03/05/06</td>
<td>08/03/06</td>
<td>4 years Deferred Adjudication</td>
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<td>3-29-07</td>
<td>Pled Guilty-State Jail --amount of time not entered</td>
<td>Bond, Tay</td>
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<td>03/14/06</td>
<td>03-29-07</td>
<td>Pled Guilty-State Jail --amount of time not entered</td>
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<td>3-29-07</td>
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<td>04-09-07</td>
<td>Pled Guilty; 3 years TDC</td>
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<td>Capias FTA issued</td>
<td>Pawgan, Scott</td>
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<td>Franklin, Byron</td>
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<td>01-25-07</td>
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<td>Quinney, Rusty DeWayne</td>
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Suspect plead guilty to assault charge count 1. 10 yrs TDC. Counts 2-3 dismissed.
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Efforts curbing crime despite growth in city

Most people believe population growth is the main reason for increased crime. But the city of Conroe is bucking that trend, and the Conroe Police Department, city officials and citizens can take the credit.

Additional law enforcement and public awareness have been the catalysts in reducing robberies, assaults, larcenies and burglaries over the past few years, despite a rapidly growing city.

While the population has increased nearly 22 percent from 2002 (93,672) to 2006 (115,475), robberies have decreased by 54 percent (126 to 58), assaults by 34 percent (235 to 155), larcenies (most thefts and frauds) by 19 percent (2,188 to 1,773) and burglaries by 14 percent (624 to 524).

The Patrol Division, headed by Lt. Mike Hansen since 1996, employs 45 patrol officers who are split up among five shifts. The entire department had 45 total officers in 1984; today, it has 102 positions, including seven additional officers since October 2004.

Hansen increased the number of shifts from three to five in February 2006, adding 12 officers to the two additional shifts during the peak hours of 11 a.m. to 3 a.m. Six officers work from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and six more work from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m.

These shifts enable the department to overlap with the three traditional shifts that place approximately a dozen officers on the streets from 6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., 2:30-10:30 p.m. and 10:30 p.m. to 6:30 a.m., so there is never a lag in police presence on the streets.

The department has grown, and the city leaders understand the battles we go through and have been very supportive in getting us the resources,” said Lt. Russell Reynolds, Criminal Investigations Division commander.

Some of those resources have been used to combat drug dealers and users, who are associated with committing other crimes that help fund their addictions.

“By getting these people off the streets and getting them into programs ... getting the others prosecuted and hopefully scaring off a lot of them,” the department has been able to reduce the number of crimes in other areas, Reynolds said.

Statistics support the theory that the city’s War on Drugs, initiated by Mayor Tommy Metcalf around two years ago, is curtailing crime in other areas. Seizures of crack cocaine by the Conroe Police Department Narcotics Division jumped more than 1,000 percent from 2005 to 2006, according to a department report.

“Let’s face it, somebody who is addicted to crack doesn’t hold a job long, so they’re out there stealing ... and it doesn’t matter who they steal from,” Reynolds said. “We’re trying to get these people off the streets; we’re reducing their opportunities to commit these crimes.”

While the increased law enforcement presence is a deterrent for criminals, conscientious citizens also have helped curb crime.

The city has implemented neighborhood meetings and marches to raise awareness. The next one will start at 5:30 p.m. May 24 at the Oscar Johnson Community Center, located at 200 Park Place and East Avenue G.

There will be crime prevention and drug awareness displays, a neighborhood walk with the mayor, police chief and residents, as well as a meeting.

Another example of community awareness was a recent seminar that included a couple of classes for city employees on crime-related issues, including pedophiles.

“That’s something you wouldn’t have seen a few years ago,” Hansen said.

“It all adds together. We tried to make it a point to get out to the people.”

The growth in Conroe will continue. But as long as Conroe police officers, city officials and citizens continue their efforts in battling the criminals who feed off that growth, residents will be able to rest easier at home and in their neighborhoods.
Drug initiative cleaning up east Conroe

For years, Louis J. Williams Sr. has seen the problems in his neighborhood and he felt that few people outside his neighborhood cared about getting them fixed.

Drug dealers walked the streets of his east Conroe neighborhood and openly practiced their trade. If it was a busy day, a dope deal could back up traffic.

"I would have to sit there and wait for two or three minutes until they got their dope sold," Williams said.

But Williams, who works in the County Attorney's office, is seeing things change and they are getting better. There are fewer deals taking place, he says, and people are not standing around on neighborhood streets flagging down cars.

"It's been quite a bit safer. There were some streets you couldn't drive down. People wouldn't move out of the road," he said.

Williams is a big supporter of Conroe Mayor Tommy Metcalf and Metcalf's proclamation to remove drug dealers from Conroe. Williams said that prior to Metcalf's push, he felt there wasn't much ambition to make east Conroe better.

"Before Metcalf took the reins, it was horrible," Williams said. "You eat this stuff, breathe this stuff and see this stuff and it's horrible. (Metcalf) wants to give kids in that community a chance to grow up and not see this."

Williams said the big difference is policing. Conroe police are in the neighborhood and they are getting the job done. Dealers are arrested, and word is getting out that east Conroe isn't an easy place to make a living anymore if you're a drug dealer.

"They have arrested quite a few people, and the streets were just so clean after those arrests," Williams said.

Recently, Metcalf held a press conference to push the other side of the equation - the courts. The message was that if the police are going to arrest the dealers, then the courts need to deal with convicted criminals effectively.

The timing of that message was perfect because the March 7 primary is loaded with judicial candidates, and those candidates have to talk about the issue. How to sentence convicted drug dealers is a big campaign issue this year. Williams says he can see a need for leniency in some cases. Having lived in east Conroe for 15 years, he's seen young people turn into old drug dealers. Some people need a second chance. Some don't.

"Some of these people deserve a break, but some need to stay gone. I don't want my grandkids seeing that stuff in my neighborhood," Williams said.

For those of us who don't live in east Conroe, it would be easy to hope the drug problem stays there. After all, it's been there for years and Conroe has grown in spite of it.

But it doesn't stay there. Most of the people who live in east Conroe are minorities, yet Williams says the buyers are white and they are young. Conroe is still a small city, and it is only as strong as its most troubled neighborhood.

It is common for our elected leaders to talk tough about drugs, especially with elections approaching. While that talk is good, it is even better to hear from someone like Williams who says things are getting better in his neighborhood.

The combination of dedicated elected leaders, aggressive police, tough courts and motivated citizens can make it very hard on drug dealers.

Robb Reeves is publisher of The Courier; his column runs on Sundays.
Success within reach for war against drugs

Our View: Mayor's leadership is bringing real results in fight against drugs in Conroe.

Recent events in Conroe show a War on Drugs that is very much in force.

Continuing his leadership on the issue, Conroe Mayor Tommy Metcalf and the city are planning a rally Thursday in southeast Conroe designed to show a community united against drug dealing and drug use.

Metcalf, Conroe City Council members, Police Chief Charlie Ray, as well as neighborhood and community leaders are inviting residents to an evening of unity against drugs 5:30 p.m. Thursday at Washington Junior High School, located at 507 Martin Luther King Place North. The evening will start with a neighborhood walk against drugs followed by hot dogs, cokes and a discussion.

It will be the first of several neighborhood meetings scheduled as part of the mayor's renewed drug initiative.

As part of its push, the city has commissioned metal street signs in red, white and blue; the signs will be placed on poles in neighborhoods as a warning to those involved in illegal drug activity.

All of this is occurring against a backdrop of significant drug busts in Conroe recently.

Thursday, Conroe police arrested three people and seized up to $75,000 in illegal drugs after spotting an alleged drug deal taking place at a Conroe motel.

And on Wednesday, the Montgomery County Special Investigation Unit arrested two people who allegedly sold an ounce of cocaine to an undercover officer at a local motel.

Finally, on Thursday again, police arrested three teenagers, including a 15-year-old who allegedly was selling drugs out of a home in the Artesian Oaks subdivision.

The degree of commitment shown by this mayor and by city and county law enforcement is truly extraordinary, and offers real hope for neighborhoods that have long struggled with this problem. If these communities can unify and continue to help police do their job, and as officials promote an anti-drug message in the local schools, success, defined as communities that are safe and orderly and no longer a haven for drug dealing, seems within reach.
Statistics show city is winning war on drugs

Our View: Numbers indicate success in war on drugs

Is the city of Conroe winning a war on drugs?

The first complete year-to-year look at the numbers suggests the answer may be yes. Bar- ring some other explanation, it’s clear: the city needs to continue its aggressive efforts to target drug dealers and drug crime in general.

In general, one can expect that cracking down on drug dealers and users will cause crime to fall across a number of categories, especially property crimes and robbery. The connection between drug use, addiction and certain kinds of crime is well-docu- mented. Addicts who do not have the means to support their drug habits will turn to crime - burglary and robbery, for example - to get the cash to feed their habits. It’s a vicious pattern, and destructive to our communities.

Some glimmer of hope that busting drug crimes is reducing others can be gleaned from the numbers released by the city of Conroe. In 2004, there were 880 misdemeanor thefts, compared with only 842 in 2005. In addition, the number of burglaries dropped from 1,220 in 2004 to 1,128 last year. Auto thefts were also down to 162 in 2005, from 194 in 2004.

One big question is whether the strong efforts by police are being followed up with a similar push by the District Attorney and the courts. It will take a little longer for that picture to emerge, but it’s a crit- ical part of the process to drive drugs out of Conroe.

Still, at this point, the numbers point to some success. The city needs to keep it up. Delivering communities and residents from drug dealing and its effects must remain a top priority.
Conroe narcotics raid nets 5 arrests

BY JAMIE NASH
COURIER STAFF

A mobile home at 309 S. Pacific in Conroe was the focus of a multi-agency narcotics investigation that culminated in the arrest of five people Thursday night.

Conroe Police Sgt. Bob Berry said the department's narcotics investigators and investigators from the Montgomery County Special Investigations Unit executed a search warrant on the residence around 8:45 p.m.

"The address has a history of involving arrests for narcotics sales and prostitution," Berry said.

Recent surveillance prompted by information regarding drug use and sales led to an undercover drug buy at the home. That incident provided probable cause for officers to obtain the search warrant, Berry said.

Initially, 12 people were removed from the small single-wide mobile home, including the homeowner.

See NARCOTICS, Page 3A
According to Berry, the group included blacks, whites and Hispanics, ranging in age from 20-something to the 70-year-old owner. He was asleep in the back of the home when officers arrived.

The home was searched and a small amount of crack cocaine was seized. All 12 people were detained during the search; five were arrested and transported to the Montgomery County Jail. The homeowner was not among them. Sedrick Bernard Davis, 27, was arrested on a warrant for a parole violation. He was held without bond. Rebecca Lynne Nault, 47, and Alvin English, 49, were charged with possession of a controlled substance, a state jail felony.

Two of those arrested were brothers. Ray Anthony “Ray Ray” Rowe, 47, was arrested for possession of a controlled substance and two outstanding city of Conroe municipal warrants. His brother, Morris Rowe, 49, was charged with possession of a controlled substance.

The rest of the 12, excluding the homeowner, received criminal trespass warnings for the location and were released.

Berry said the house has been there for a long time and was typical of the residences seen under those circumstances.

“Most are in complete squalor,” he said. “Many are lacking in electricity, water or some utility.”

They tend to have piles of dirty clothes and old food, Berry said.

“Basically, what’s happened is their priorities have changed,” Berry said. “They’re not living to be living; they’re living to do drugs.”

Officers left the scene around 11 p.m. It was the second execution of a drug-related search warrant in the past week and the second since Mayor Tommy Metcalf announced his anti-drug initiative for 2006 and his plan to work with city and county agencies to clean up Conroe.

Jamie Nash can be reached at jnash@mail.hcnonline.net.
Drug bust finds squatters in woman’s home

By Jamie Nash
Courier Staff

A multi-agency law enforcement task force executed a search warrant Friday night at the home of an elderly woman located at 410 S. San Jacinto in Conroe.

Conroe Police Department Sgt. Bob Berry said officers removed 11 people from the home and confiscated 3.5 grams of crack cocaine, along with various miscellaneous drug paraphernalia. Three people were arrested. Jeffrey Paul Wise, 35, was arrested for possession of a controlled substance and outstanding city warrants. Reginald Steele, 34, was arrested for possession of a controlled substance; and Eugene Taylor, 44, was arrested on outstanding city warrants. Bond was set at $3,000 each for Wise and Steele on the possession of a controlled substance charge, which is a fourth-degree, or state jail, felony, punishable by 180 days in jail.

See BUST, Page 3A

Police removed 11 people from this Conroe home on Friday night. Drugs and drug paraphernalia were found inside the ransacked home. Three people were arrested and the rest were forced to leave. The home’s elderly owner was hospitalized and knew nothing about what was going on.

Photo by Scott J. Engle
days to two years in jail and a fine of up to $10,000. Wise had a criminal history including drugs and weapons charges.

Homeowner Edna Jackson, who turns 89 in March, had been in the hospital for two weeks and left the home in the care of Wise, her grandson, Berry said. During that time, police received complaints about the residence and set up surveillance.

"Undercover officers purchased illegal drugs at the location, which gave them probable cause to get a search warrant for the residence," Berry said.

The task force is comprised of Conroe Police Narcotics officers, investigators from the Montgomery County Sheriff's Office Special Investigation Unit and Conroe Police Department SWAT. The group of more than 25 officers, including an MCSO K-9 unit, met at the police station around 10:30 p.m. Friday. They were briefed, then split up into vehicles and went to the home to execute the warrant.

"Some at the back of the house appeared to be playing dominoes or cards," Berry said. "There were three people sleeping in Jackson's bed."
Man caught in narcotics bust 2nd time

BY JAMIE NASH
COURIER STAFF

A Conroe man was arrested by police on narcotics charges for the second time in less than six months Thursday night.

Jefferey Hatchett, 25, is being withheld without bond pending his court date.

Conroe Police Department Narcotics Investigators, assisted by Conroe Police Department SWAT, executed narcotics search warrants at the Lodge Suites Apartments, located at 920 Interstate 45. Hatchett, his brother Jerry Hatchett, 29, and Janice Bradley, 48, were arrested.

Conroe Police Sgt. Bob Berry said Jeffrey Hatchett was free on bond awaiting trial after his arrest in November. That arrest, also reported in The Courier, was made when the Montgomery County Special Investigation Unit executed narcotics search warrants at a home on First Street.

See NARCOTICS, Page 3A

Jefferey Hatchett sat on the sidewalk beneath his apartment as he waited for officers to transport him to the Montgomery County Jail for his second narcotics arrest in less than six months.

Photo by Scott J. Engle
faced multiple drug charges then, followed by a motion to
revoke his probation in December.

"Hatchett was free on a $1,500 bond for motion to
revoke probation, a $15,000 bond for possession of a con-
trolled substance and $3,000 bond for possession of firearms
by felon," Berry said.

Hatchett’s arrest also
marked the second time his
school-age children were
found living in a situation
where drugs were allegedly
sold, he said.

Two warrants were execu-
ted simultaneously in rooms 40
and 44 around 9 p.m. Thurs-
day. Berry said the warrant
for room 40 was a "no knock"
warrant, but the door was
unlocked, so forced entry was
not required. Jeffrey Hatch-
ett was found alone inside and
taken into custody, Berry said.

As Hatchett sat on the side-
walk waiting to be transport-
ed to jail, he was asked
whether he knew about Con-
roe Mayor Tommy Metcalf’s
drug initiative. He said he
read The Courier and was
aware the mayor wanted drug
dealers out of the city.

"I ain’t going against the
mayor; I know I can’t win," Hatchett said.

He was arrested and

JEFFREY HATCHETT

charged with two counts of
possession of a controlled sub-
stance (cocaine and ecstasy),
possession of marijuana and
tampering with evidence, as
well as outstanding municipal
warrants. A magistrate
ordered him held without
bond Friday morning.

Berry said Hatchett told
officers his children were out
for the evening. Inside the
apartment, a school backpack
with a child’s name written in
permanent marker and school
dresses inside lay on the floor
beneath a bar that was lit-
tered with drugs and drug
 paraphernalia, including a
 substance that tested positive
for cocaine, and a razorblade.

On Friday, Berry said Child
Protective Services would
again be notified.

The search warrant for
room 44 was a "knock and
announce" warrant. However,
no one opened the door, and
entry was made with the use
of a door ram, Berry said.

"Four subjects were found
inside the apartment; and a
variety of narcotics were
found inside the apartment,
including Jerry Hatchett, Je-
ffrey’s brother," he said.

Jerry Hatchett was arrest-
ed and charged with posses-
sion of a controlled substance
(cocaine) and possession of
marijuana. His bond was set
at $5,000. Janice Marie
Bradley was also in the room.
She was arrested and charged
with possession of a controlled
substance (cocaine) and pos-
session of marijuana, as well
as outstanding municipal
warrants. Her bond was set at
$8,000. The other two people
in the apartment at the time
were released without
charges.

Room 44 also contained
evidence of children staying or
living there, but none was
present at the time the war-
rants were executed.

Berry said the search war-
rants were obtained after the
suspects allegedly sold drugs
to undercover officers.

"They were arrested for
possession Thursday night
because they were not selling
at that time," Berry said.
"However, more charges are
pending."

All three arrested had
criminal records. Some of the
other residents stopped offi-
cers and thanked them as
they left.

Jamie Nash can be reached at
jnash@mail.chrononline.net.
West Tabernacle Church
"The House of Miracles"
428 Old Magnolia Rd.
Conroe, Texas 77304

A. R. Shelton, Pastor

To: Mayor Tommy Metcalf
    Chief Charlie Ray
    Detective Roosevelt Lasker

From: Pastor A. R. Shelton

Re: The Cities War on Drugs

Dear City Officials let me pause from a very busy schedule to give kudos to Mayor Metcalf, Chief Ray, Detective Lasker and all others who are responsible for the major turn around on our fight against drugs in our city and county. Thank God for the concern of people in high places. I really can appreciate what happens when city, community, county, and churches come together for one common goal and that is to make our streets safe for everyone.

I’ve been blessed to be a part of the community meetings and community walks thru our neighborhoods we have had since Mayor Metcalf has taken reign as Mayor and how he has kept the promises he made during his campaign run for Mayor of the city of Conroe.

I also noticed how his excitement has flowed down to those who are part of this united team. Chief Ray has taken the ball and is running with it along with Detective Lasker who keeps me informed along with other pastors on how we can help this fight on the war on drugs.

This is a win-win situation for all who want to do what is right. Once again Thank You Mayor Metcalf, Chief Ray, Detective Lasker, and Sheriff Gage along C.P.D and M.C.S.D for making it possible for our seniors to once again sit on their porches, our children to ride their bicycles in their communities, and citizens to walk the streets in safety.

May God Continue to Bless You

Pastor A. R. Shelton
West Tabernacle Church
Outreach program quietly helping victims of drug war

Our View: It's not just a war on drugs; sometimes it's a rescue mission.

For most of our readers, the city of Conroe's War on Drugs means a war against the drug trade and the crime it typically spawns, like burglary, theft and armed robbery.

But a recent neighborhood event lead by Conroe Mayor Tommy Metcalf helped shine a spotlight on victims who've lost more than property or money - they've lost a parent, sometimes both - in this war.

At the Washington Outreach Program in southeast Conroe - an area of town where much of Conroe's drug activity has been centered - children find a safe place to play and learn after school in a program funded by the YMCA and the city of Conroe. Many of the children in the outreach program, according to Jezebel Franklin, one of the site counselors there, live with grandparents or other family members because their parents have drug problems.

The drug trade is evil not just because of the crime it spawns, but because of what it does to individual users, who lose control of their lives. Drug addicts lose their jobs, their marriages, their families, their self respect - and others suffer as a result, especially children.

We continue to be told from residents and those who work in these areas of Conroe that the anti-drug initiative is working, that the dealers who once openly sold drugs on street corners have disappeared. The city recently released crime statistics that appear to indicate the crackdown is having an impact on property crimes.

The city should continue to focus its efforts on arresting drug dealers and users.

Meanwhile, the rest of us can help in other ways - like helping provide the resources for the Washington Outreach and others. Between 40 and 50 children per day participate in the outreach program and stay from 5:30-9:30 p.m. When school is out for summer, the hours will change to 11 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. Donations and volunteers are needed. If you'd like to help, call the program's director, Officer Roosevelt Lasker, at the YMCA at (936) 756-9345.
AGENCY AND OFFICER INFORMATION

The 2006 Drug Initiative was adopted throughout the Conroe Police Department and officers, civilian employees, and volunteers participated in the project at levels from serving food at the neighborhood meetings to the patrol and narcotics investigators who chased down drug suspects.

All City Departments participated in the initiative at levels from approving parade permits to assembling and erecting street signs for the project.

Outside organizations such as the local newspaper, the Conroe Courier played an integral part in promoting citizen involvement in the project as well as informing its readers of the project’s successes.

Local businesses participated by donating food for the neighborhood meetings and even participated in preparing and serving the food.

For more detailed information, questions, or comments on the 2006 Drug Initiative, contact:

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