

Officer Shoots, Wounds Attacking Dog in Prineville Drug Bust

by Cheryl McDermott

An 80-pound Rottweiler-German Shepard mix that attacked and bit one detective and was charging another was shot and wounded during the execution of a search warrant in a northeast Prineville residence. Methamphetamine, firearms, drug manufacturing materials and surveillance equipment was seized late Wednesday morning, said authorities.

Robert N. Prentice, CCJ Photo A two-month investigation by detectives of the Central Oregon Drug Enforcement (CODE) team identified Robert N. Prentice, 31, of Prineville as "a person involved in the possession and sales of methamphetamine" in the Prineville and Crook County areas, wrote Lt. Jim Porter in a news release.

By the last weeks of October, evidence sufficient to obtain a search warrant for Prentice's residence at 1746 NE Laughlin Boulevard in Prineville, his person, and vehicles was collected by surveillance and other techniques, said Porter.

CODE detectives, assisted by members of the Crook County Sheriff's Department conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle driven by Kenneth McBeth at 11 a.m. November 1. The traffic stop occurred in front of the Prentice residence, and Prentice was a passenger in the vehicle.

Prentice and McBeth were both taken into custody without incident and placed in the backseat of a Crook County patrol car, said Lt. Porter. Prentice then kicked and broke the window out of the patrol car.

After CODE detectives and a sheriff's deputy approached the front door of Prentice's residence and identified themselves in an effort to execute the search warrant, a woman answering the door released Prentice's dog who immediately attacked and bit a detective. A second detective fired one round from his weapon and wounded the dog as the Rottweiler-German Shepard mix turned to charge him. The dog stopped the attack and retreated inside the home.

Prineville Police officers were summoned and arrived a short time later to assist in securing the home. Once the residence was secure, officers immediately transported the dog to a local veterinary clinic where it received medical treatment for the gunshot wound.

A search of the residence and vehicles yielded approximately ¼ ounce of methamphetamine, individually packaged for sale; marijuana; scales used to weigh meth for street-level sale; packaging materials for meth sales; more than three hundred dollars in cash; over 300 rounds of pistol ammunition; three handguns; and what are believed to be stolen collectable coins.

Of the three handguns seized, one of the pistols was stolen, one had the serial numbers ground off, and all three were loaded.

An elaborate security system including remote cameras to monitor anyone approaching was found installed in and around Prentice's home. Detectives also found a radio frequency scanner that was set to continuously monitor the local police dispatching frequency.

In the investigation of meth drug dealers, "police often encounter these types of security measures which are supplemented by the use of dogs from aggressive breeds," said Lt. Porter.

Prentice was arrested and lodged at the Crook County Jail, and will face charges of manufacturing a controlled substance within 1000 feet of a school, possession and manufacturing of methamphetamine, first-degree criminal mischief (for breaking the patrol car's window), possession of a firearm with an altered identification number, and three counts of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

McBeth, the 46-year old driver of the car and also a resident of the NE Laughlin Boulevard home, was interviewed and released.

The CODE Team is a multi-jurisdictional narcotics task force comprised of detectives from all Central Oregon law enforcement agencies including: Bend Police Department, Deschutes County Sheriff's Office, Redmond Police Department, Crook County Sheriff's Office, Prineville Police Department, Oregon State Police, United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), Deschutes County District Attorney, and the Oregon National Guard.

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