



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY PROSECUTOR

**MERCER COUNTY
COURT HOUSE
P.O. BOX 8068**

JOSEPH L. BOCCHINI, JR.
Prosecutor

TRENTON, NEW JERSEY 08650-0068

**PHONE: (609) 989-6350
(609) 989-6305**

FAX #: (609) 989-0161

ANGELO J. ONOFRI
First Assistant Prosecutor

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CONTACT: Casey A. DeBlasio
(609) 989-6379

**Mercer County Narcotics Task Force Arrests Three,
Seizes Two Guns and Various Drugs**

TRENTON – Three men were arrested and various drugs were seized yesterday by the Mercer County Narcotics Task Force as it wrapped up an investigation in the city, Mercer County Prosecutor Joseph L. Bocchini Jr. and Trenton Police Director Ernest Parrey Jr. reported.

The investigation, which lasted several months, concluded on Thursday at approximately 10 a.m. when officers with the prosecutor's office, the county sheriff's office, the New Jersey State Police, the DEA, and the Hamilton, Lawrence, Robbinsville and Trenton police, under the command of Lt. Mike Novembre, executed multiple search warrants in the city. Leonard Bryant and Raymond Brooks were detained in a white Pontiac G6 in the area of North Olden and New York avenues by officers conducting surveillance. A search of Bryant revealed a small amount of marijuana and \$1,551. A portion of the money is believed to be counterfeit. A search of Brooks revealed a small amount of ecstasy, marijuana and \$17.

A search of Bryant's residence on Violet Street revealed a 9mm handgun in the basement/garage area. Officers also discovered a digital scale, plastic baggies, an unknown white powder and \$60 of suspected counterfeit currency in a Jeep Cherokee parked in the rear driveway of 61 Violet Street.

Officers also executed search warrants at 307 Rutherford Avenue as part of the investigation. Resident London Bethea was taken into custody in an upstairs bedroom where a defaced, loaded 9mm handgun, approximately 50 Percocet pills, a small quantity of marijuana and \$2,040 were located. Officers also discovered an empty handgun magazine, a digital scale and a small amount of marijuana in the house. Two Percocet pills, which Bethea threw out the window, were located outside.

Novembre said the estimated street value of the seized Percocet pills is approximately \$385.

Bryant, 40, is charged with unlawful possession of a weapon, certain persons not to possess a weapon and possession of marijuana under 50 grams. His bail was set at \$100,000 cash. Brooks, 46, is charged with possession of ecstasy and possession of marijuana, and was released pending future court appearances.

Bethea, 45, is charged with multiple counts of drug possession and possession with the intent to distribute, possession of a weapon while committing a narcotics offense, possession of a defaced weapon and possession of drug paraphernalia. His bail was set at \$50,000 cash or bond.

Despite having been charged, every defendant is presumed innocent until found guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

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