

'Haskell connection' wrecks county drug ring

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WANAUQUE — Local police called it Operation Haskell Vice.

It was the operation that smashed a county cocaine ring,

which included five locations in Wanaque.

The entire Wanaque police department was involved in the raid, which took place Friday evening at 6 p.m. at ten locations. "Every-

thing went smoothly," said Detective Sergeant Robert Kronyak. "All five locations in Wanaque and Haskell were hit at 6 p.m. simultaneously, and the other locations were also hit at 6 p.m. Everyone

was apprehended."

Kronyak, who initiated the investigation, said, "They had a cocaine ring and John Artis was running it from Wanaque."

Artis attracted national attention

last year when his triple-murder conviction was overturned with those of Rubin "Hurricane" Carter.

Kronyak said the other locations supplying drugs to dealers rather than three in Paterson, one in

Bloomingtondale, and one in Hawthorne. A dozen people were arrested in the drug bust.

The cocaine ring was primarily supplying drugs to dealers rather than three in Paterson, one in

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than users. "They weren't holding significant amounts," said Kronyak. "They were running to New York City every day, which we knew from surveillance."

Kronyak said the operation, which was 6-8 weeks long, was top secret. "It expanded into an operation with wire taps," Kronyak said. "Twelve Wanaque police officers along with two special police women officers along with investigators and detectives from the Passaic County Prosecutors Office in Paterson were in on the operation and arrest."

Assistant Prosecutor Paul Uhlik said, "It was a very well organized operation, apparently supplying not only users but other dealers in upper Passaic County. There was dealing going on right out of the 7-11 Store in Haskell."

Uhlik said Artis came into the picture as the investigation un-

folded.

He praised the work of the Wanaque Police Department. "We were very pleased with their efforts. It made the investigation that much easier."

In Wanaque, police arrested a reputed leader of the ring, Rosemarie Linda Hendricks, 39. They confiscated about 1/8 ounce of cocaine, narcotics-cutting and packaging equipment, Valium, and a small amount of marijuana, and drug transaction records in her Ringwood Avenue apartment.

Police arrested a second key figure in the ring, Christine McCaghey, 43, on Lakeside Avenue, along with Charles Quintana, 20, and Christopher Caserta, 18.

Michael Mully, 27, was arrested in a Brook Street home, and Cathy Osborne, 22, was arrested at a second Ringwood Avenue residence.

Hendricks, McCaghey, Caserta, Quintana, Mully and Hawthorne resident Michael Tremonti, 35, were all charged with conspiracy to distribute cocaine. Osborne was charged with conspiracy to distribute marijuana.

Paterson residents Maureen and Alphonso Payne, 31, and 30 respectively, and Bloomingdale resident Rick McGrady were charged with conspiracy to

possess cocaine.

Artis, 40, who was arrested at 6 p.m. while driving on Hamburg Turnpike in Wayne, was charged with conspiracy to distribute cocaine, which carries a maximum 12 year sentence, and receiving stolen property, which carries a five-year term.

His wife, Dorothy, who was also arrested in the raid, was charged with possession of narcotics paraphernalia, possession of a gun without a permit, and possession of Valium. She was released on \$5,000 bail.

The other defendants appeared before Superior Court Judge Ralph Martin Monday in a hearing where they were advised of charges and rights, and bail was set.

Judge Martin set bail for Artis and Hendrick at \$20,000 and McCaghey's at \$10,000. Bail was set at \$15,000 for Quintana, Caserta, Mully, and Tremonti. Bail for Hendricks and McCaghey carried a 10 percent cash option.

According to the prosecutor's office, the ring sold about two ounces of cocaine a week and an undetermined amount of "crack," grossing between \$3,000 and \$5,000 a week. Crack is a pure, smokeable form of cocaine in rock form.