

9 arrested, cocaine seized in Orange raids

Orange Police Director Charles Cobbett yesterday announced the arrest of nine people during a weeklong crackdown that is part of a continuing effort to rid the city of drugs.

"Narcotics is one of our biggest problems," Cobbett said. "We're cleaning the streets up the best way we can and we're also letting the pushers know that if they come to Orange, the chances of them getting caught are great."

During sweeps conducted between Sept. 5 and Sept. 9 in conjunction with the Essex County Sheriff's Office's Bureau of Narcotics and the Essex County Prosecutor's Office, police confiscated \$8,000 worth of cocaine and arrested two people at their home and seven others on the streets, he said.

Dwayne Jones, 27, and Pamela Jones, 27, of 425 Central Ave., were arrested and charged with possession of cocaine, possession of cocaine with intent to sell, and possession of cocaine with intent to sell within 1,000 feet of a school.

Cobbett said the raid was the result of a monthlong investigation con-

ducted by Lt. Benson Piserchio and Detectives Steve Crumpton, Anthony Carpinello, Michael Gannon and Edgar Pinckney of the Orange Police Department with the assistance of county detectives.

He said seven others were arrested and charged with possession of a controlled dangerous substance and possession with an intent to sell during street sweeps.

They were identified as: Craig Coleman, 22, of South Center Street, arrested at 97 Wilson Place; Kenneth Dill, 27, of Laffen, Bermuda, arrested at Oakwood Avenue and Hampton Terrace; George Mero, 26, of Stuyvesant Avenue in Irvington, arrested at Central Avenue and South Center Street; Chester Gordon, 35, of Halsted Street in East Orange, arrested at Oakwood Avenue and Brywn Street; Maurice Hocker, 30, of Hayward Street, arrested at Freeway and Oakwood avenues; Andrew Lavine, 20, of Holland Avenue, arrested on Central Avenue, and Kevin Meadows, 20, of Valley Road in West Orange, arrested at Central and Lincoln avenues.

FROM ROBBERY TO MURDER

Heist suspect tied to Mt. Olive killing, Carolina attack

By DORY DEVLIN
and BILL RILEY

Burglary charges filed against a 27-year-old man last week in Netcong led to his arrest yesterday in the murder of 40-year-old Joanne Jenkins in her Mt. Olive apartment Jan. 2.

Morris County Prosecutor Lee Trumbull said the suspect, Nicholas P. Muscio, who has lived in Netcong and Mt. Olive for four years, also was indicted Monday in Raleigh, N.C., on charges related to a 1987 attack on a woman who suffered brain damage from a severe beating.

In that case, he said, the 26-year-old victim's unsuspecting roommate was asleep in the apartment, similar to the scenario of the Mt. Olive killing when the victim's teenage daughter was asleep in another room.

North Carolina police believe the woman was stalked by Muscio, who followed her home from an all-night gas station in North Raleigh, the prosecutor said.

Authorities in Florida said Muscio, who grew up in New Jersey and attended Mt. Olive High School, also served a prison term there for breaking into the apartment of a sleeping woman and raping her at gunpoint in 1980.

Trumbull credited Netcong police with uncovering evidence during a Sept. 4 burglary investigation that led authorities to obtain a search warrant for the apartment where Muscio and his wife and two children have lived since Aug. 1.

Trumbull said the state Division of Youth and Family Services obtained a court order Sept. 6 to remove the children from their parents' custody "as a precautionary measure."

The search of Muscio's apartment uncovered ties to the Jenkins murder and the North Carolina attack, he said.

Included were Jenkins' obituary and news articles about the investigation of her murder, as well as the driver's license of 26-year-old Sonia Kim Galloway, 26, who authorities learned had been severely beaten with a blunt object in North Carolina on June 6, 1987.

Trumbull revealed police in both states had fingerprints from the crime scenes that have been matched to Muscio's prints.

According to the prosecutor, Netcong Patrolman James Arbolino was assigned to investigate the report of a suspicious person in the vicinity of the Netcong Heights Apartments the night of Sept. 4.

Included was a report that the suspect was believed to have entered the unit in the complex that was occupied by Muscio, who worked there as a maintenance man.

During the investigation, Arbolino observed certain items in Muscio's car that matched those reported stolen in burglaries in the complex. This caused police to obtain a search warrant that uncovered the articles related to the Jenkins murder and the North Carolina case, Trumbull said.

Muscio has been held in the Morris



Morris County Prosecutor Lee Trumbull, center, announces the arrest of Nicholas Muscio. Trumbull is flanked by Charles Coe, left, chief of investigations for the county prosecutor's office, and Mt. Olive Police Chief Edward Kane.

County Jail in Morristown in lieu of \$35,000 bail since his arrest on the Netcong burglary charges. Yesterday, he was charged by Mt. Olive police with murdering Jenkins, breaking into her apartment with the intent to commit bodily harm and possession of a knife used to stab Jenkins to death.

The weapon, which was from Jenkins' kitchen, was recovered at the scene, Trumbull disclosed.

Authorities said they will seek higher bail today on the new charges. North Carolina already has filed a detainer against Muscio for their charges, which means he cannot be released prior to an extradition hearing.

"I'm sure they will eventually wish to pursue their case as well, since it is a very serious matter," Trumbull said.

In addition to the charges filed yesterday, Muscio was indicted by a Morris County grand jury last month on charges of stealing musical instruments worth about \$3,000 from Mt. Olive High School in March and April, when he was employed there as custodian with his cousin, Stephanie Denaro, 23, who also was charged. They were free on \$7,500 bail each.

Jenkins, the prosecutor speculated, may have been "a target of opportunity," who Muscio first observed sleeping on a couch in the living room of her apartment in the Village Green complex in Budd Lake. Trumbull said authorities believe Muscio returned later when Jenkins was asleep in her bedroom.

Trumbull said there was no indication that anything was stolen from Jenkins' apartment or that she had been sexually assaulted.

"We don't really know what his



Nicholas P. Muscio
Indicted in Raleigh

motivation was, or perhaps he was forced to flee before he wanted to," he said, noting Jenkins' daughter, Paula, 17, slept through the attack on her mother.

Jenkins, he said, was stabbed in her bedroom and appeared to have attempted to escape.

Charles Coe, chief of investigations for the prosecutor's office, said there were "defensive wounds" on Jenkins' body, indicating she attempted to fight off her attacker.

Coe also said police found a fingerprint on the kitchen window in her apartment that had been unidentified until it was matched to Muscio.

"We believe he had a propensity to roam at night," said Mt. Olive Police Chief Edward Kane, who added Muscio was subjected to a routine motor vehi-

cle stop by police Jan. 2 less than two miles from Jenkins apartment.

Kane admitted police were extremely reluctant "to release information about Jenkins murder, maintaining they were trying to prevent a panic. He contended police took appropriate steps to increase surveillance in the Village Green complex during the search for the murderer.

In retrospect, the fact that Muscio followed press accounts of the investigation so closely justified the withholding of information, he added.

Kane noted police are investigating Muscio as a possible suspect in the unsolved stabbing of a woman who was attacked while she slept in her apartment at the Eagle Rock Village complex in Budd Lake on April 25. The victim's daughter interrupted the man and began screaming, authorities said at the time.

Muscio, according to parole records and police in Florida, was sentenced to five years in prison for a sexual assault on a woman in Pompano Beach in 1980, while he was armed. Police said the victim was asleep in her apartment when she was awakened by a man with a gun who raped her and stole her wallet.

He was released in September 1983 and moved out of Florida a month later, according to the records. A spokesman for the state parole office in Broward County said Muscio was placed on probation for 20 years for the Pompano Beach conviction and a number of other burglaries.

"We know he has lived at 27 different addresses in New Jersey and other states during the last four years," Coe said. "Authorities in each of those jurisdictions will be contacted."

Neighbor tip yields arrest

Newark narcotics detectives confiscated a semi-automatic weapon and a handgun yesterday from a High Street apartment where they arrested a man after he sold drugs to one of the officers, police said.

Police were alerted to the drug sales in an apartment at 730 High St. by complaints from neighborhood residents, said Sgt. Ernest Newby, a police spokesman.

During the investigation, Detectives Irving Bradley Jr., Mario Simmons and Ralph Boswell, were able to purchase a small amount of cocaine from a man known as Kalif at 12:20 p.m., said Lt. Robert Scarrillo of the city's narcotics squad. The officers then

raided the apartment and arrested Kenneth Christian, 23, Scarrillo said.

Police confiscated \$345 in cash, 78.9 grams of cocaine and 140 grams of marijuana from the apartment along with a 9mm automatic pistol and an Uzi-type semi-automatic gun, Scarrillo said. The semi-automatic gun resembles an Israeli Uzi but was made in Florida, he said.

Christian was charged with weapons offenses, possession and possession with intent to distribute both drugs and violating the 1,000-foot, drug-free school zone. He was also charged with sale of the drugs and sale of the drugs within 1,000 feet of the Quitman Street School.

Irvington halts bulk pickup

In an attempt to control out-of-town dumping of bulk items on Irvington streets, the township council last night introduced steps to halt curbside pickup of such items.

Under the proposed ordinance, scheduled for a public hearing on Sept. 27, items which do not fit into a standard three-cubic-foot container must be delivered to the municipal compacting site on Coit Street, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday and 8 a.m. to

noon on Saturdays.

Residents must present tickets at the disposal site. Books of 20 tickets may be purchased at the municipal building by residents, who must show proof of residency.

Charges will be: \$5 for washers, dryers, refrigerators, boilers and stoves; \$4 for sofas and air conditioners; \$3 for mattresses, desks, dressers and tables; \$2 for sinks, and \$1 for end tables, TVs, and chairs.

Parking curbed near Seton

Permanent parking restrictions on streets facing Seton Hall University were adopted last night by the South Orange Board of Trustees.

The ordinance was adopted after a request by the Essex County Engineering Department, which said the new bans are necessary to control traffic

Under the measure, 24-hour no-parking zones will be established on both sides of South Orange Avenue between Kingman Road and Warren Court; on both sides of North Centre Street, directly opposite the Seton Hall entrance on South Orange Avenue and on both sides of Turrell Avenue

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