



Sheriff Jimmy Thornton  
Sampson Co. Sheriff's Office  
112 Fontana Street  
Clinton, NC 28328  
(910) 592-4141

# ***PRESS RELEASE***

DATE: November 12, 2009

TOPIC: Fifteen Pounds of Marijuana Seized on Byrd-Yancey Bass Road

FOR RELEASE: Immediate

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## CONTACT INFORMATION:

Sampson Co. Sheriff's Office - Capt. Eric Pope @ (910) 592-4141

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Clinton, NC – On Tuesday, November 10, 2009, deputies with the Sampson County Sheriff's Office executed a search warrant at 198 Byrd-Yancey Bass Road, Clinton, NC. During a search of the residence eight bundles of marijuana, weighing fifteen pounds altogether, were located in the residence.

The occupant of the residence, Francisco Javier Reynoso, age 28, was taken into custody and charged with Trafficking by Possession of Marijuana and Trafficking by Transporting Marijuana. Mr. Reynoso was placed in the Sampson County Detention Center under a \$150,000.00 bond.

The search warrant was executed based on intelligence obtained from Fayetteville Police Department's Interdiction Team and surveillance of the residence. Sheriff Jimmy Thornton stated, "Inter-agency intelligence sharing is vital to combating illegal drugs, and this case is a good example of the results of such sharing."



Franciso Reynoso



Eight Bales of Marijuana Seized



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# ***PRESS RELEASE***

DATE: November 20, 2009

TOPIC: Sheriff Offers Tips for Safe Holiday Shopping

FOR RELEASE: Immediate

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## **CONTACT INFORMATION:**

Sampson Co. Sheriff's Office - Capt. Eric Pope @ (910) 592-4141

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Clinton, NC - "The holiday season is right around the corner and shoppers are crowding malls and discount stores to buy the latest gadgets and find the best deals," said Sheriff Jimmy Thornton of Sampson County.

But what shoppers are neglecting is their safety. According to Sheriff Thornton "This time of year attracts more shopping-related criminal activity because of the larger crowds and the extended store hours. These factors and the usual distraction of shopping, creates a more favorable environment for petty thieves and other offenders."

The Sheriff reminds all Sampson County residents to follow these safety tips:

### **Shopping Safety:**

- A single shopper is the best target for theft. Always shop with a friend or relative.
- When going shopping, tell someone where you are going and what time to expect you to return. Also, make sure they know what you are wearing, as well as the type of vehicle you are driving.
- Shop during daylight hours. If you shop at night, park your vehicle in a well-lit area.
- Dress casually and comfortably and avoid wearing expensive jewelry. If carrying cash, keep it in your front pocket rather than in a purse or wallet. This makes it much more difficult for a pick-pocket to remove. Also store car keys in a pants or jacket pocket. If your purse is stolen, you will still be able to drive home.
- Pay careful attention to your surroundings and avoid overloading yourself with packages. It is important to have clear visibility and freedom of motion to avoid mishaps.
- When returning to your vehicle, check around it and in the back seat. Be aware of strangers approaching you for any reason. Have your car keys in

your hand to avoid spending unnecessary time unprotected from the security of your vehicle.

- If you feel uneasy returning to your vehicle alone, find a security guard and ask them to walk you to your car.

According to Sheriff Thornton “During this time of year, busy holiday shoppers become careless and vulnerable to other crimes as well. Credit card fraud and gift card fraud are on the rise. However, taking a few preventive measures can help.”

### **Credit Card Fraud:**

- Keep a close watch on your credit card every time you use it, and make sure you get it back as quickly as possible.
- Never write your PIN number on your credit card.
- Never leave your credit cards or receipts lying around.
- Shield your credit card number so that others around you can't copy it or capture it on a mobile telephone or other camera.
- Only carry credit cards that you absolutely need.
- Shred anything with your credit card number written on it.
- If you're planning to purchase online, make sure the web page where you enter your credit card information is secure through SSL (Secure Socket Layer). You can tell if the web page is secure by looking for the gold lock or key icon at the bottom corner of your browser window.
- If you're not comfortable submitting your information through the internet, call the seller and give them your information over the telephone. Never send your credit card information via email.
- Check the company out. Only do business with companies that provide a physical address and telephone number.
- Keep good records. Always print out a copy of any online products or services you purchase.

### **Gift Card Fraud:**

- Never buy gift cards from online auction sites. This is a large source of gift card fraud. Many of the gift cards are stolen, counterfeit or used.
- Only buy gift cards directly from the store issuing the gift card or from a secure retailer's website.
- Don't buy gift cards off of publicly displayed racks in retail stores. Only purchase gift cards at the sales terminal from the cashier.
- Always carefully examine both the front and back of a gift card before you buy it. If you see a PIN number, ask for a different card. If the card looks like it has been tampered with in any way, put it back.

- Always ask the store cashier to scan the gift card in front of you. This will guarantee that your card is valid when you buy it and that it reflects the balance you just charged it with.
- Always keep your receipt as a proof of purchase as long as there is money stored on the gift card.
- If possible, register your gift card at the store's website
- Never give your Social Security number, date of birth or any other unneeded private information when purchasing a gift card. No reputable company will ask for this information.

In light of these problems, Sheriff Thornton warns shoppers to be careful so that they don't become the victim of criminal activity. "Unfortunately, when shopping, people have a tendency to let their guard down," said Sheriff Thornton. "However, paying attention and taking precautions can help eliminate their chances of being victimized."



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# ***PRESS RELEASE***

DATE: November 13, 2009

TOPIC: Shots Fired Call Leads to Discovery of Body

FOR RELEASE: Immediate

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## CONTACT INFORMATION:

Sampson Co. Sheriff's Office - Capt. Eric Pope @ (910) 592-4141

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Clinton, NC – On Wednesday, November 11, 2009, around 2:20 PM, the Sampson County E-911 center received a “shots fired” call from 130 Castle Lane, Harrells, NC. The caller advised that they heard multiple gunshots from the residence next to them. Deputies from the Sampson County Sheriff's Office responded to the scene.

Upon arrival on the scene, the deputies discovered the front door of a double-wide trailer partially open. After several attempts to get the occupant(s) to come out, the deputies entered the house and discovered a body on the living room floor. The deceased, identified as Christopher Perice Owens, age 23, of Garland, NC, had signs of obvious trauma to the body. The deputies observed multiple bullet holes in the walls of the residence. No one else was located inside the residence.

While investigators were processing the crime scene on Castle Road, Evans Cromartie, age 24, of Harrells, NC, went to the Sheriff's Office in Clinton in regard to the shooting on Castle Lane. Mr. Cromartie had a gunshot wound to his shoulder area and was transported to Sampson Regional Medical Center for treatment.

Neither Owens nor Cromartie were residents of the double-wide located on Castle Lane. Currently, investigators are conducting interviews with potential witnesses and processing physical evidence located on Castle Lane to determine what transpired.

Investigators are awaiting the final autopsy results and the investigation is still on-going. Anyone with information concerning the events on Castle Lane is encouraged to contact the Sheriff's Office at (910) 592-4141.