

Chief John Annear of the Richland Center Police Department reports that, on 10-31-14, members of the Richland-Iowa-Grant Drug Task Force executed a search warrant at 538 S. Sheldon St., in the City of Richland Center. The search warrant was the culmination of a ten month investigation conducted by the Drug Task Force concerning the distribution and sale of marijuana at that address. Items recovered during the execution of the search warrant included numerous items of drug paraphernalia, drug packaging material, scales, over a quarter pound of marijuana, and nearly \$2000 in US currency.

As a result of the Drug Task Force investigation and subsequent search warrant, four adults were taken into custody on various drug related charges, which all carry a penalty enhancer for having occurred within one thousand feet of a school.

Nicholas A. Craig, 27 of Richland Center, was arrested and tentatively charged with Delivery of Marijuana, Possession of Marijuana with Intent to Deliver, Maintaining a Drug Trafficking House, and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

Robert S. Engebretson, 31 of Richland Center, was arrested and tentatively charged with twelve (12) counts of Delivery of Marijuana, Possession of Marijuana with Intent to Deliver, Maintaining a Drug Trafficking House, Possession of Marijuana, and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia. Engebretson's charges carry the additional penalty enhancer for previous drug related convictions.

Matthew A. LaPorte, 30 of Richland Center, was arrested and tentatively charged with Possession of Marijuana with Intent to Deliver, Maintaining a Drug Trafficking House, and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

George W. Denman III, 21 of Sextonville, was arrested and tentatively charged with Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

All of the above listed charges have been forwarded to the Richland County District Attorney's Office for prosecution.

The Richland-Iowa-Grant Drug Task Force is a Tri-County combined investigative unit. Locally, members from the Richland Center Police Department and the Richland County Sheriff's Department are assigned to investigate and combat area drug trafficking and abuse.

The Drug Task Force was assisted in the execution of the search warrant by the Richland County Special Response Team, as well as Officers of the Richland Center Police Department and Richland County Sheriff's Department.

Chief Annear would like to point out that this investigation started with concerned citizens being observant and reporting suspicious activity to the Drug Task Force. Chief Annear would like citizens to remain vigilant and continue to report suspicious activity, no matter how minor, noting that this case is a prime example of how citizen involvement partnered with law enforcement can reduce crime within our community.