

Burglary ring spanned seven counties, at least two years

BY EBONY DAVIS

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OZARK — A federal investigation is underway as Dale County Sheriff's officials continue to piece together a burglary ring believed to have been operating over the last couple of years, Dale County Sheriff Wally Olson said Thursday.

Olson said dozens of pellet guns, rifles, shotguns and handguns, a bow-and-arrow, television sets, games, jewelry, cameras and other items were seized after search warrants were executed at three residences on Mary McClendon Road in Skipperville and two on County Road 54 in the Edwin Community last week.

Arrested Dec. 3 in connection to the burglaries was 32-year-old Marcus Antonio Grubbs of Skipperville.

He was charged with first-degree possession of marijuana, first-degree receiving stolen property, two counts of possession of a controlled substance and two counts of unlawful distribution of a controlled substance.

Grubbs was released from the Dale County Jail after posting a \$120,000

bond Dec. 7, Olson said.

Olson said other arrests have been made and more could be pending but declined to release more information on any arrests.



Grubbs

He said the burglaries are likely to have taken place from as far away as Butler County to Jackson County, Florida.

Olson said he believed the recovered firearms could have been used to generate illegal revenue or for protection of a drug operation.

He said the condition of some of the stolen property, as well as how some of the items were stored, showed the burglary ring may have been operating as far back as two years ago.

While some of the victims of the burglaries have been identified, Olson encouraged people who either reported stolen items in the area or recognized any of the items to contact their local law enforcement agency.

He also encouraged residents who have valuable and unique items in their possession to docu-



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ment the inventory, whether by taking photographs of the items or simply documenting any special markings

the items might have.

"Hopefully, this will stop some of the burglaries in the area, but I'm not optimistic," Olson said.

"Though we might catch one group, it's another one that will pop up in its place. It's important for law enforcement to work together in these investigations."

Olson said he believed the recovery of the items will bring closure to at least some of the victims.

"They're a lot of victims tied to these guns. The types of guns some of them were, someone is definitely missing these guns," he said.

Olson said agencies involved in the investigation included sheriff's departments in Barbour, Bullock, Butler, Henry, Houston and Montgomery counties in Alabama and in Jackson County, Florida, and police departments in Abbeville, Dothan, Eufaula and Ozark.



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Dale County Sheriff Wally Olson speaks at a press conference Thursday concerning law