

## WARLOCKS MOTORCYCLE GANG BUSTED

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By Jim Leusner of The Sentinel Staff

DAYTONA BEACH - One minute, 100 motorcycle gang members were laying a brother to rest. The next, they were laid out on the ground, machine guns pointed at their heads.

The gunmen were federal, state and local police officers, who crashed a funeral procession outside a cemetery Saturday afternoon searching for 30 Warlocks gang members wanted on weapons and explosives trafficking charges. By late Saturday nearly a dozen people had been charged.

During a 13-month investigation, dubbed Operation Easy Rider, four undercover federal agents and a Volusia County deputy sheriff became members of the group. Authorities say the agents bought 26 machine guns, 84 homemade bombs and two silencers from gang members.

One of the agents even became president of a Warlocks chapter in Fort Lauderdale. He recruited four other undercover officers to make up the first-ever all-police gang chapter, said Robert Creighton, head of the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms in Florida.

By late Saturday, at least 11 persons had been charged on federal warrants issued in Orlando, including Warlocks national president John "Spike" Ingraio, 40, of Apopka. Several others were charged with possessing machine guns, pistols and knives. Creighton said he expected more arrests to follow.

Bruce Snyder, an ATF spokesman, said one Warlocks enforcer who was arrested was wearing a bulletproof vest and had five pistols and an Uzi submachine gun hidden on his body and motorcycle. The arrests came on the eve of Daytona's annual Bike Week celebration - and at a time when police fear that the Warlocks and the rival Outlaws motorcycle gang may be gearing up for a turf war, said Volusia County Sheriff Robert Vogel.

The Warlocks were having a service for Raymond "Bear" Chaffin, 44, of Edgewater, who was found shot to death execution-style in his home nine days ago.

Vogel said there are no suspects in the killing of the Warlocks' New Smyrna Beach chapter president. But he and other investigators said they fear the Outlaws could have committed the crime - or that the Warlocks believe the Outlaws were responsible.

The funeral, also attended by the Warlocks' girlfriends and allies from other gangs, gave authorities the opportunity to catch numerous suspects and remove the undercover agents from the Warlocks organization by arresting them along with everyone else.

"We let them have their funeral, and we made sure we didn't interfere," Creighton said. "But we didn't want them driving down this road and whacking someone tonight. That's a scenario we've seen time and time again with motorcycle gangs."

Minutes before the service began, a Brevard County Warlock called "Stepchild" had told a reporter: "It's a wonder the FBI isn't here. They usually have a lot of people here taking pictures." It turned out that even the funeral attendants were undercover agents.

The elaborate trap was sprung by 150 officers, including 80 SWAT members who jumped from surrounding woods and rental trucks about 4:10 p.m. as gang members were leaving Bellevue-Cedar Hills Memorial Gardens Cemetery, near the Daytona Beach Regional Airport. The officers had all 100 cyclists in the procession off their bikes in less than a minute. Police said no one resisted and no one was injured.

The line of handcuffed motorcyclists lying on the shoulder of Bellevue Avenue stretched nearly one-third of a mile outside the cemetery. Standing over them were officers from ATF, Volusia, Seminole and Orange county sheriff's offices, the Orlando Police Department and the Florida Department of Law Enforcement.

"I'm kind of amused," said one Warlock, lying face down and trying to talk to a SWAT officer pointing a machine gun. "Our brother gets killed, and you arrest us."

Several Warlocks said they believe police staged the raid simply to harass the club and gain publicity. One rider who was detained, Bruce Scott, 43, of Daytona Beach, said he was a state agriculture department inspector who simply attended the funeral because the widow was a friend of his wife.

"This is the shabbiest display of law enforcement I've ever seen," he said while handcuffed on the roadway.

Authorities said several of those detained who had no charges pending against them were questioned and released. Chaffin's family was escorted out of the cemetery by patrol deputies - standard procedure for funerals - before the raid started.

In addition to Warlocks president Ingrao, others charged were Michael "Wildman" Altizer, 46, and Billy Horn, 34, of Orlando; and Thomas "Contender" McGarry, 29, and Mark Mace, 29, both of Lockhart. Also charged were Michael "Big Mike" Evenson, 33, of Leesburg; Danny Lee, 35, of Christmas; Phillip "Philzee" McCoy, 28, of Cocoa Beach; John Ooman, 38, St. Petersburg; and Richard Floyd, no age available, of Florence, S.C.

The suspects were expected to be transferred to the Seminole County jail late Saturday. Bond hearings are scheduled for Monday in Orlando federal court.

The investigation started after Ingrao recruited undercover agents to form a chapter in South Florida, said Mike Hegerfeld, head of the ATF office in Orlando, who supervised the probe. Agents posed as free-lance bodyguards for Colombian cocaine bosses and weapons brokers who bought weapons and explosives from gang members.

It was one of the few times an undercover agent had been indoctrinated into a biker gang, said ATF's Creighton. Other investigators said the agent was in line to become Florida regional president for the gang, which has been expanding into other states.

Federal agents say the Warlocks gang, which was formed around 1966, has about 75 members in several states, including South Carolina, Virginia, Minnesota and New York. Most of the club's members - about 40 - are in chapters in Orlando, New Smyrna Beach, Brevard County, St. Petersburg and Pasco County. The Warlocks are rivals of the Outlaws motorcycle gang - which historically has controlled gang operations in Florida. But the Outlaws have been hurt by the conviction of 30 of their top members on federal racketeering, drug and prostitution charges since 1981, investigators said.

The Outlaws recently have been increasing their presence in the Daytona Beach area, investigators said. Police hope that Saturday's arrests will cripple the Warlocks' expansion.

By early evening, those detained at the cemetery were lined up at a makeshift command post - a Volusia County maintenance yard - waiting to be processed and questioned. Many of them wore leather jackets and scraggly beards. Several shook their heads and cursed.

A few hundred yards away at the cemetery, an ATF agent wearing a flak jacket and carrying a machine gun reflected on the day's events and smiled.

"We're the new gang in town," he said.