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'Operation Roll The Dice' continues toward potential felony charges

By Jeff M. Hardison © Nov. 9, 2018 at 2:38 p.m.

CHIEFLAND -- Six days after one of the largest law enforcement operations where simultaneous raids occurred in Chiefland was completed, no arrests have been made, according to information in a Friday (Nov. 9) press release from Chiefland Police Chief Scott Anderson.

Nevertheless, "Operation Roll The Dice," as it has been named, continues with the potential of felony charges being brought against the owners of eight properties where the raids happened from downtown Chiefland in the south, to a location near Walmart and two more farther north in Chiefland, Chief Anderson said.

On Nov. 3, members of the Chiefland Police Department who were assisted by members of the Levy County Sheriff's Office, Marion County Sheriff's Office, Columbia County Sheriff's Office, Trenton Public Service Department (or Trenton Police Department) and the Ocala Police Department raided Internet cafe sites named Fish Treasures, Blu Max, Tropical Treasure, Chiefland Arcade, Happy Days Arcade, Cyber Center, Patriot Social Club and the Blue Lagoon, Anderson said.

These raids came, Anderson said, after the investigation which began weeks ago. Undercover officers went to each location and found reasonable cause to believe Florida Statutes had been violated.

No employees or patrons were arrested, Anderson said, but felony charges are pending on the business owners for their alleged violation of Florida Statute 849.01 and 849.231.

Those statutes respectively are for keeping a gambling house and unlawful possession of illegal gambling devices.

Chief Anderson said law enforcement officers seized in excess of \$68,000 in cash from the eight Internet cafes. There were about 130 gambling machines and in excess of 400 computers seized as a result of the use of those machines for the purpose of illegal gambling, Anderson said.

The chief said he is thankful to the agencies and the 45 law enforcement officers who executed the eight search warrants. Levy County Department of Public Safety EMS and OPD SWAT Medics stood by in the event that a medical emergency during the operation, and the police chief noted his gratitude for the service of those professionals as well.

(Please see the related story and photos below this story.)

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CPD busts all eight suspected illegal gambling businesses in that city on Saturday night



A man in a hoodie walks on the sidewalk next to one of the places that was raided as a Chiefland Police Department K-9 cruiser sits parked on U.S. Highway 19 in downtown Chiefland on Saturday night (Nov. 3). There was an Ocala Police Department cruiser at this scene – which was one of eight places in the city that were simultaneously shutdown by the CPD with help from other law enforcement agencies.

By Jeff M. Hardison © Nov. 4, 2018 at 10:08 a.m.

Story and Photos

By Jeff M. Hardison © Nov. 4, 2018 at 10:08 a.m.

Updated Nov. 5, 2018 at 6:48 a.m.

CHIEFLAND -- The Chiefland Police Department busted all eight suspected illegal gambling enterprises (commonly called an Internet café) Saturday night (Nov. 4).

Police Chief Scott Anderson coordinated the raids so that all eight were hit simultaneously.

Police vehicles from the CPD, Levy County Sheriff's Office, Gilchrist County Sheriff's Office and Ocala Police Department were noticed at the locations from the southern part of downtown Chiefland to the northern region of the city limits -- near Chiefland Billiards.

People were coming to Chiefland at all hours of the day and night, even from places like Live Oak (Suwannee County) just to gamble at these establishments.

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This Ocala Police Department cruiser is one of the vehicles parked next to one of the eight alleged crime scenes. A Facebook (social media) post notes Columbia County Sheriff's Office was involved in helping the CPD, but that has not been confirmed as of Monday (Nov. 5) at 6:28 a.m. This building once housed the Yum Yum Shoppe, which was a place where people could dine on Working Cow brand of ice cream



This is the suspected illegal gambling site near to China One in the Walmart plaza of Chiefland. Seen here on Saturday night, like the other places the 'Open' light was on but the establishment was not accepting any customers after the CPD closed it down with its raid.

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This is the front of the suspected illegal gambling operation just to the east of Chiefland Billiards and on the west side of U.S. Highway 19. This vehicle is from the Levy County Sheriff's Office.



These signs on the door to the suspected illegal gambling place named 'BluMax Social Center' show that people who were customers there and were trying to sell things to other customers would be asked to leave. This social center, after midnight, required knocking to be allowed in. The blue card shows customers there are some times during the 24-hour period when machines had to be shut down due to shift changes.

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This business with its 'Open' sign is allegedly one of the Internet cafes. The sign says it is another type of business. It is north of the Chrysler dealership and it is on the west side of U.S. 19.



This alleged illegal gambling operation is located just north of Chiefland High School on U.S. Highway 129 across the street from Save-A-Lot.

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This Internet Cafe named Happy Days Arcade has its 'Open' sign lit on Saturday night, but the police presence helped potential customers understand that it was closed, due to being a place where illegal gambling was suspected to be happening.



This building used to be the place where ice cream was the draw. Then it became a suspected illegal gambling location. It is more or less across U.S. 19 from The Deer Camp in downtown Chiefland.

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Fish Tables Internet Gaming at the Blue Lagoon is a place where suspected illegal gambling used to happen, until the CPD closed it. This is just northeast of the intersection of State Road 345 and U.S. Highway 19 in downtown Chiefland.