



Rick Staly, Sheriff
FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

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Weekend Roundup: April 10 - 13

Multiple weekend traffic stops lead to Felony Arrests and Drug Seizures

BUNNELL, Fla. — Flagler County Sheriff's Office deputies made 12 arrests this past weekend between 6 p.m. on Friday, April 10, 2026, and 6 a.m. on Monday, April 13, 2026. Deputies handled 963 calls for service and made 170 traffic stops.

Traffic Stop Leads to Arrest of St. Augustine Man After Discovery of Suspected Methamphetamine, THC wax, and Drug Paraphernalia

On Saturday, deputies arrested a St. Augustine man after locating multiple narcotics in his vehicle during a traffic stop.

Saturday night, a deputy conducting traffic enforcement around North Ocean Shore Boulevard and Surfview Drive in Flagler Beach conducted a traffic stop on a white Chevrolet after observing the vehicle speeding.

During the traffic stop, deputies contacted the driver, identified as John Tiller, 56, of St. Augustine, and a female passenger. While speaking to the occupants, deputies noticed the smell of marijuana inside vehicle and asked if they had a medical marijuana card. Both occupants replied they did not.

During a search, deputies located a THC dab pen on Tiller and a small plastic bag containing a clear, crystal-like substance which tested positive for methamphetamine. Deputies also located suspected THC wax concentrate and additional drug paraphernalia inside the vehicle, including in a container found inside a Crown Royal bag on the driver-side floorboard.

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Deputies arrested Tiller for possession of methamphetamine, possession of cannabis (20 grams or less), and possession of drug paraphernalia. Tiller was transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility, where he is being held on \$3,500 bond. The female passenger was not found to be in possession of any illegal substances and was released.



John Tiller (Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility mug shot)

“When deputies smell marijuana or see indicators of drug activity during a stop, they’re going to take the time to investigate,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “I commend our deputies for looking beyond the initial stop.”

Tiller’s criminal history includes prior arrests for possession of cannabis and drug paraphernalia.

Deputies Arrest South Daytona Woman on Multiple Charges after Traffic Stop

On Sunday, deputies arrested a South Daytona woman following a traffic stop, during which they discovered a counterfeit registration validation decal and pills suspected of being a controlled substance.

That afternoon, a deputy conducted a traffic stop near Belle Terre Parkway and Whipoorwill Drive in Palm Coast after observing a silver 2022 Toyota Corolla with an expired registration and a decal that appeared to be a replica. During the traffic stop, deputies identified the driver as Marta Pina, 48, of South Daytona.

During the investigation, deputies confirmed the vehicle’s license plate had expired in April 2023 and the validation decal on the tag was likely counterfeit.

After informing Pina that she would be going to jail, Pina requested deputies obtain her purse from her vehicle so it could be taken to jail with her. Deputies searched the purse and located a bag containing six round white tablets, which were identified as lorazepam, a Schedule IV controlled substance. Pina stated the pills were from a valid prescription but was unable to provide proof of a prescription.

“Counterfeit tags and a homemade registration decal are crimes, used to avoid tolls, attempt to trick

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law enforcement and, likely, continuing to drive without insurance,” said Sheriff Rick Staly. “If you’re driving in Flagler County with a counterfeit registration decal and controlled substances, expect to be stopped, expect to be investigated, and expect to go to the Green Roof Inn.”

Deputies arrested Pina for counterfeit/possessing a counterfeit tag validation sticker, expired registration over six months (second or subsequent offense), and possession of a Schedule IV controlled substance. Pina was transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility, where she is being held on \$2,650 bond. Deputies also issued traffic citations related to the stop.



Marta Pina (Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility mug shot)

Broken Headlight Traffic Stop Leads to Arrest of Teen with Marijuana, Hashish Oil, Suspected Psychedelic Mushrooms, Firearms and Cash.

The Flagler County Sheriff’s Office arrested a Callahan, Florida, drug dealer following a late-night traffic stop in Palm Coast that began with an equipment violation and ended with deputies locating marijuana, suspected cannabis concentrate, firearms, and cash inside the vehicle.

On Sunday, April 12, a deputy conducting traffic enforcement near U.S. Highway 1 North and Old Kings Road North observed a silver Ford Crown Victoria traveling with an inoperable passenger-side headlight. The deputy conducted a traffic stop at U.S. Highway 1 North and Sawmill Branch Boulevard.

The driver, Philip Mercado, 19, of Callahan, was the sole occupant of the vehicle. The deputy detected a strong odor consistent with marijuana coming from the vehicle. Mercado first stated that he had a little marijuana in the car, later changing his story to say he had a few ounces which he had picked up in Jacksonville and a THC vape. Mercado stated that he did not have a valid medical marijuana card. Mercado also stated that he had no firearms on him or in the vehicle.

During a search of the vehicle, deputies located approximately 93.57 grams of marijuana, multiple digital scales, and \$1,358.50 in U.S. currency. Deputies also located a vape device and a bong containing residue that field-tested positive for THC (hashish oil/cannabis concentrate). In addition, deputies located mushrooms (approximately 6.84 grams) that will be submitted for laboratory testing

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and additional charges pending the results.

Deputies also located firearms and ammunition inside the vehicle, including two loaded handguns and additional magazines.



Philip Mercado (Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility mug shot)

“Drug dealers come to our community to make a quick buck and leave behind addiction, violence, and heartbreak,” said Sheriff Staly. “A simple stop over a headlight took an armed drug dealer off the street and made Palm Coast safer. Dealer be warned, don’t come to Flagler County to sell your illegal drugs as you’re going to take a trip to the Green Roof Inn.”

Deputies arrested Mercado for possession of marijuana with intent to sell, manufacture, or deliver; possession of a firearm during the commission of a felony; possession of a controlled substance (hashish/cannabis concentrate); and possession of drug paraphernalia. Mercado was transported to the Sheriff Perry Hall Inmate Detention Facility, where he is being held on \$18,000 bond.

Mercado was also issued a traffic citation for driving while license suspended without knowledge and a verbal warning for the inoperable headlight.



Drugs and a Firearm Seized from Philip Mercado (FCSO)

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