

Zionville Pot Operation Busted; Two Charged

Written by Steve Frank
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Nearly a half-million dollars in growing marijuana was seized as a sophisticated growing operation was dismantled yesterday in Zionville. Two arrests were made as narcotics detectives from the Watauga County Sheriff's Office Special Operations Division executed the search warrant at a residence at 124 Chase-Cole Lane, Zionville, as part of a narcotics investigation involving the manufacture and distribution of Marijuana. During the search, detectives found and seized 401 Marijuana plants at varying stages of development being cultivated using a sophisticated hydroponic growing system. The total weight of the marijuana plants was 130.5 lbs and had an estimated street value of over \$450,000. Detectives also seized packaged Marijuana which was ready for sell, 67 grams of Psilocybin mushrooms, and assorted drug paraphernalia. Jason Dale Blount, 27, and Geneva Anna-Marie Natale, 24, were charged with two counts of Level 2 Trafficking in Marijuana, Manufacturing Marijuana, Manufacturing Hashish, PWISD Schedule I Psilocybin, Maintaining a Dwelling Controlled Substance, and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia. Blount and Natale are being held at the Watauga County Detention Facility in lieu of a \$20,000 secured bond, both scheduled to appear in District Court on June 26, 2013.