

## Drugs Bound for Boone Net 14+ Year Fed Term

Written by Steve Frank

Wednesday, 04 June 2014 15:36

---

Mauricio Mario Baltazar, 21, of Lake City, Ga. was sentenced today to 169 months in prison for his role as a supplier of more than three pounds of methamphetamine—drugs destined for Boone—found at the time of his arrest, according to Anne Tompkins, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina.

According to court documents and court proceedings, from 2012 until the time of his arrest in April 2013, Baltazar established an extensive methamphetamine trafficking network that spanned from Georgia to North Carolina and beyond. According to court records, on the day of his arrest, Baltazar was traveling from Georgia transporting approximately 250 grams of methamphetamine (approx. 1,000 dosage units) and was on his way to conduct a drug transaction at a hotel in Boone, N.C. Law enforcement seized the drugs from Baltazar during a traffic stop and Baltazar was arrested. Court records indicate that when law enforcement executed a search warrant at Baltazar's residence in Georgia, they found a 12-gauge shotgun, a rifle with scope, a ballistic vest, as well as other weapons. Court records indicate that law enforcement also found a cell phone which contained numerous photographs of Baltazar holding an assault rifle, handguns with high-capacity magazines and tactical lights, high-powered rifles and a pump action shotgun. Baltazar also had pictures of bulk currency fanned out with stacks of \$100, \$50, and \$20 bills.

According to court records, inside Baltazar's residence, law enforcement also found "Sur13" gang graffiti consistent with gang-related tattoos on Baltazar's body. Sur 13, also known as "Sureños" or "Southside," are loosely affiliated gangs that pay tribute to the Mexican Mafia. Baltazar will remain in federal custody and will be transferred to the custody of the Federal Bureau of Prisons upon designation of a federal facility. All federal sentences are served without the possibility of parole.

This investigation was led by HSI with the assistance of the North Carolina State Bureau of Investigation, the Boone Police Department, the Ashe County Sheriff's Office and the Caldwell County Sheriff's Office. The prosecution for the government is being handled by

Assistant U.S. Attorney Steven R. Kaufman of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Charlotte.