ATF NIBIN Program
Hits of the Week
November 22 to December 6, 2004

NIBIN Branch, Firearms Programs Division, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives

Week of 11/22: The Houston (TX) Police Department Laboratory used the NIBIN system to link a pistol recovered from a suspect in the robbery of a fast food restaurant to ballistic evidence recovered at the attempted robbery of the same fast food restaurant four days before. Employees at the fast food restaurant saw a suspect carrying a pistol run up to the door they were going to exit as they were closing for the night. The suspect demanded that they open the door, but the employees ran and exited through a back door. They heard one gunshot as they ran. Police found the front door had been shot and the freezer had been opened. A spent bullet and shell casings were recovered and imaged into NIBIN. Four days later police were called to an armed robbery in progress at the same fast food restaurant. Police reported that two female suspects, one armed, approached the front door as the manager and employees were exiting at closing. They forced the employees into the freezer and the employees heard the female suspects yell out for someone else to come in. As the three suspects were exiting with the money, police arrested them and recovered a pistol. The male suspect told police he had worked for the restaurant several months before and had quit. All three suspects confessed to their roles in the robbery. The pistol was test fired and entered into NIBIN resulting in the link to the attempted robbery four days earlier.

Week of 11/29: The Detroit (MI) Police Department Crime Laboratory used the NIBIN system to link a pistol recovered from a subject charged with carrying a concealed weapon to ballistic evidence recovered at a homicide a month earlier. Three men were walking home from a store when they were approached by two suspects and ordered to lie on the ground and empty their pockets. After the robbery the suspects began shooting at the victims. One of the victims was shot in the head and died. Police recovered cartridge casings from 9mm and .40-caliber firearms. The ballistic evidence was imaged into NIBIN. Less than a month later officers on routine patrol saw a large group of males congregating in the street. As the police approached, the group dispersed into several directions. The officers noticed one of the subjects take a handgun out of his pocket and throw it into a vehicle as he walked. The suspect was detained, the firearm was recovered from the vehicle and the suspect was arrested and charged with carrying a concealed weapon. The firearm was test fired and imaged into NIBIN resulting in the link to the homicide.

Week of 12/6: The Marion County Crime Lab in Indianapolis (IN) used the NIBIN system to match a test fire from a weapon seized during a traffic stop to ballistic evidence collected sixteen months earlier at the scene of a shooting incident outside a residence. Marion County deputies responded to a call for shots fired outside a residence and located two victims who were running from the area. The victims told the deputies they had been shot at by the occupant of a residence and gave a description of the suspect. Officers went to the residence and found no one matching the description of the suspect and the occupants of the home claimed they did not know anything about any shots being fired. Deputies, however, recovered five .357-caliber cartridge casings near the front door of the residence. A sample cartridge case was imaged into NIBIN. Sixteen months later an officer from the Indianapolis Police Department was on routine patrol when he attempted to stop a vehicle displaying a license plate registered to another vehicle. After a short pursuit, the vehicle was stopped and the driver was arrested for driving on a suspended license. During the arrest the officer found a .357-caliber pistol and a large bag of marijuana. The weapon was test fired and imaged into NIBIN resulting in the link to the shooting incident sixteen months earlier in Marion County.