

# VCRP: 2010

## VCRP PARTNERS:

Alaska State Troopers  
U.S. Marshals  
DOC Probations  
U.S. Postal Inspectors  
District Attorney's Office  
U.S. Attorney's Office  
Village Police Officers  
Village Public Safety Officers



Article and Photos by:  
*Megan A. Peters*

Trooper Steve Kevan somberly walked into the tight quarters of an Emmonak home and removed his hat and gloves. The sub-zero temperatures from outside could be felt emanating from Trooper Kevan's clothes as he sat down on a stool next to a fizzing container of pink liquid with eight blueberries floating on the surface. "You know why I am here, Mr. Kassock? You understand this is a serious matter, Home-brew?" Mr. Kassock nodded and took another drag off of his hand-rolled cigarette.

Normally Trooper Kevan is a larger-than-life character—and little of that has to do with his intimidating size. On this occasion he had a humble, quiet voice and his posture was unassuming. "I'd like to talk to you about it and ask you some questions, if that is okay. But first, I am going to read you your rights and see if you have any questions for me."

While Trooper Kevan continued his interview, a Deputy U.S. Marshal and Captain Steve Arlow, Commander of Alaska State Troopers' C Detachment, listened and looked around the small home for evidence of home-brew activity. A cousin of Mr. Kassock was sitting on the couch nearby and offering encouraging words and support.

Trooper Kevan, Captain Arlow and the Deputy U.S. Marshal, along with 31 other Law Enforcement officers, were in the Yukon-Kuskokwim Delta participating in a week-long Village Crime Reduction and Community-Oriented Policing Program (VCRP) backed by Governor Sean Parnell as a part of the "Safe Homes, Strong Families" initiative.



Trooper Steve Kevan field tests a batch of home-brew found in a home in Emmonak. Samples of the home-brew are also collected to send off for further analysis. Before leaving the home, Trooper Kevan poured the liquid down the drain and punctured the container with a knife to prevent further use.

VCRP is a multi-faceted operation. The Community-oriented policing aspect is vital in fostering positive relationships between villages and law enforcement officers. Communities in the area have repeatedly asked law enforcement to rid their villages of alcohol and violence. However, in many instances in the past and present, the people in the villages were unwilling to step forward with good tips that are needed to develop cases. By meeting with community leaders, school officials and the people living in the villages, more and more individuals realize they have to be apart of the process to reach the goal. Individuals are stepping forward more than ever to be a part of a working solution.

A focus of the program was contacting all individuals required to register with the Sex Offender and Child Kidnapper Registry to verify compliancy status. During the sweep, 71 offenders were contacted. The contacts resulted in 16 arrests of individuals for being out of compliance. During the contacts, photos were taken of the offenders along with their home coordinates being logged and documented. Holding offenders accountable is one way for communities to safeguard families.

Individuals on probation were contacted as apart of VCRP to verify their compliance regarding court-imposed conditions. The contacts were mostly positive and individuals were forthcoming and friendly during their visits. There were a few contacts that didn't go so smoothly. The very first contact of the operation resulted in a man jumping out a back window in an attempt to avoid law enforcement. One of the Marshals slipped on the ice while pursuing him. After a brief chase, and getting some help from witnesses in locating the man, the runner was taken into custody without further incident.

More than a dozen firearms were seized during the compliancy contacts that took place in the Y-K Delta. Most of the weapons were discovered in Emmonak. It is against both state and federal law for a felon to have firearms in their possession or in their home, regardless of who owns the gun. The weapons had to be identified and logged then transported to a secure evidence holding facility in Bethel.



**Alaska State Troopers and Deputy U.S. Marshals snapped a group shot in front of AST's two Caravans before heading into the field. The Caravans were used extensively during the operation to transport prisoners and officers.**



**Trooper Josh Cook and a Deputy U.S. Marshal review paperwork before making contact with Sex Offenders and individuals on probation in Kotlik, AK.**



**Yeast is one of the main ingredients for making home-brew. Troopers found an empty bag thrown away while investigating allegations of manufacturing alcohol during a case in Emmonak, AK.**

# VCRP STATS

Sex Offender Compliancy Checks:	71
Offenders Out of Compliance:	16
Assaults:	13
Warrant Arrests:	19
Home-brew Related Arrests:	10
Probation Compliancy Checks:	14
Probation Violation Arrests:	6
DUI Arrests:	1
MICS Arrest:	2
Trespass Arrests:	1
Contraband Arrests:	1
Search and Rescue Operations:	3
Drug/Alcohol Arrests:	6
Total Investigative Contacts:	476
Total Arrests:	74

\*Statistics are based off of preliminary data and are subject to change.

## Villages Visited

- Bethel
- Emmonak
- Kwethluk
- Chevak
- Kasigluk
- Napaskiak
- Nunapitchuk
- Hooper Bay
- Akiachak
- Alakanuk
- Kotlik
- Akiak
- Atmautluak

The Alaska Bureau of Alcohol and Drug Enforcement Investigators took advantage of the opportunity presented at VCRP to team with United States Postal Inspectors and conduct a number of drug and alcohol interdiction operations. Officers performed undercover buys as well as carried out airport and postal interdiction contacts. Their efforts produced 34 new cases, 2 felony arrests, 4 misdemeanor arrests and 2 probation arrests. In addition to the arrests, a large amount of alcohol, oxycodone and marijuana was seized.

The program was a very new experience for many of the Deputy U.S. Marshals and even some of the troopers. Due to a weather delay, initial plans had to be scrapped and re-worked. Instead of flying out to villages as the VCRP called for, some troopers and marshals jumped on snowmachines and headed out to villages relatively close to the hub village of Bethel. It was the first time riding a snow machine for many of the marshals.

Trooper Andy Evarts, currently stationed in Fairbanks, has flown for AST for years and has logged many hours in the cockpits of a variety of planes. The VCRP took him to a region he



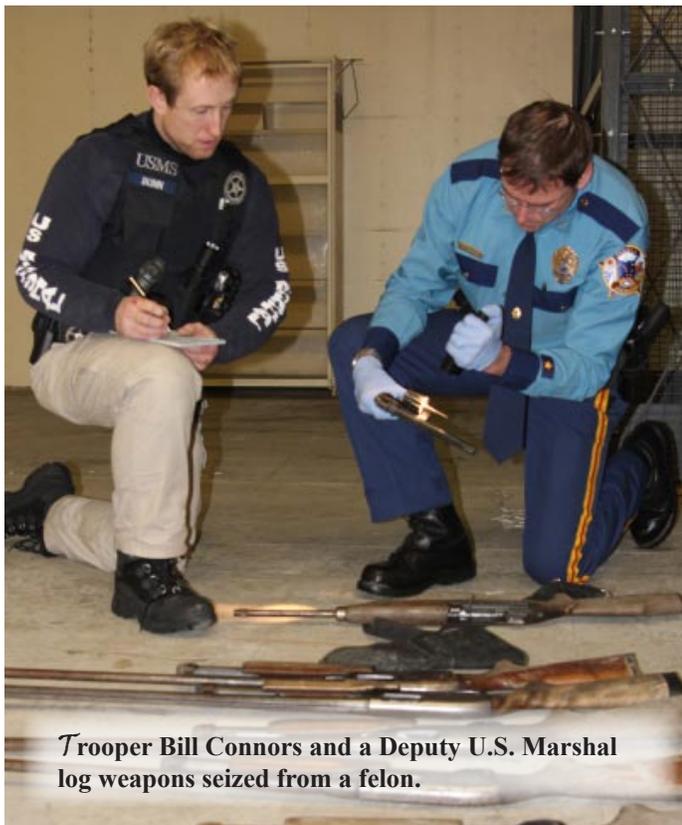
Before heading out to another village for compliancy checks troopers were called on to respond to a domestic violence incident in Emmonak. Troopers responded to a number of assaults in progress while out in Rural Alaska.

hadn't seen before.

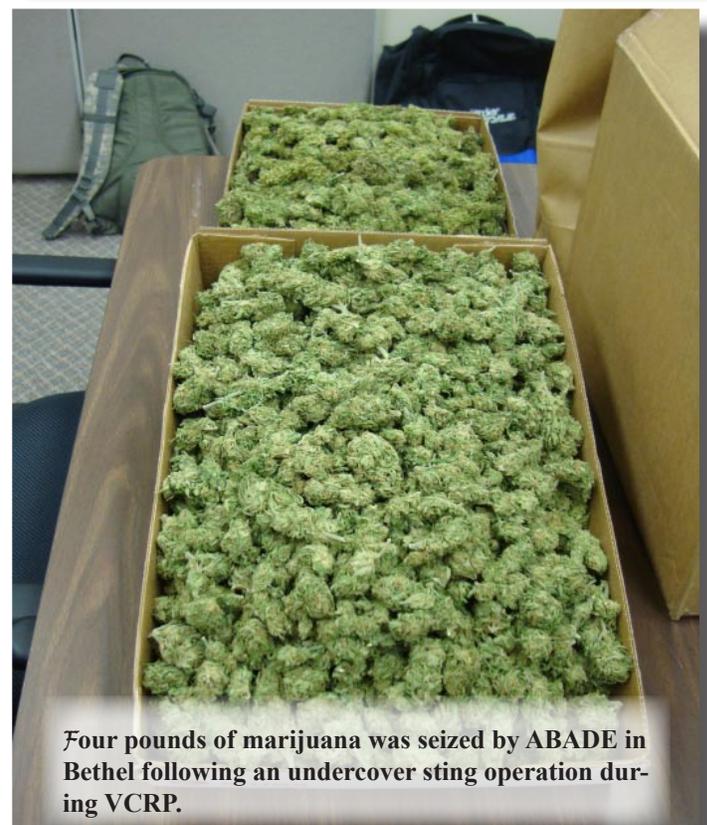
The VCRP was a very unique program. Even though the U.S. Marshals and the Alaska State Troopers have had a strong, positive working relationship, this operation was the first of its kind with the two agencies pairing together in two-man teams and enforcing the laws side-by-side. Many other agencies were crucial in the success of VCRP by providing support, resources and manpower. The reach and scope of VCRP was enormous and the communities effected by the programs were grateful for the concentrated efforts put forth to help the villages regain control of the violence, alcohol and drug issues that cause turmoil.



*Trooper Bill Connors has some difficulty finding and making out a serial number on a rifle seized from a felon.*



*Trooper Bill Connors and a Deputy U.S. Marshal log weapons seized from a felon.*



*Four pounds of marijuana was seized by ABADE in Bethel following an undercover sting operation during VCRP.*