



# Department of Justice

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## **DEPUTY SHERIFF INDICTED ON DRUG TRAFFICKING CHARGES**

Ocala, Florida - United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announces the return by a grand jury of an indictment charging Marion County Deputy Sheriff Nicholas M. Ragosta (40, Ocala) with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute 100 or more kilograms of marijuana, with possession with intent to distribute 100 or more kilograms of marijuana, and with using, carrying, and possessing a firearm in relation to and in furtherance of the possession offense. If convicted on all counts, Nicholas M. Ragosta faces a minimum sentence of 12 years and a maximum penalty of life in federal prison. The indictment also notifies Nicholas M. Ragosta that the United States intends to forfeit assets which are alleged to be traceable to proceeds of the offenses. According to the indictment, the offenses took place on or about May 15, 2009. An indictment is merely a formal charge that a defendant has committed a violation of the federal criminal laws, and every defendant is presumed innocent unless, and until, proven guilty.

This case was investigated by the Marion County Sheriff's Office, the Florida Department of Law Enforcement, and the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration. It will be prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Sam Armstrong.