



**SOLANO COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE**  
**Thomas A. Ferrara, Sheriff-Coroner**

---

530 Union Avenue, Ste. 100, Fairfield, CA 94533  
(707) 784-7000

**INFORMATION RELEASE** **11/26/13**  
**TWO BODIES DISCOVERED ON HOUSEBOAT IN THE DELTA**

On Monday 11-25-13 just before 1:30 p.m. the Solano County Sheriff's Office was contacted by the Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office regarding a house boat they had located in Spoonbill Creek, just off of the deep water channel, approximately 6 miles south of Rio Vista. Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office was in the area looking for two overdue fishermen that had been reported to their office by a family member. Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office reported that they had located the house boat in the area and that two adult male subjects were deceased on the boat.

Solano County Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol and Investigations Bureau responded to the area and took over the scene from Contra Costa County Sheriff's Office. While on board investigators did confirm that the two male subjects were deceased and located items that indicated that methamphetamine was being consumed and perhaps manufactured on the boat. As investigators began to inspect the boat they noticed an odd odor within the cabin and exited the boat for safety reasons. Investigators did not re-enter the boat until additional personnel could be brought in to determine the source of the odor and deem the area safe. Due to the potential hazards associated with methamphetamine manufacturing the boat was secured overnight by Solano County Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol and US Coast Guard and was not moved until it was safe to do so. The area where the boat was located in is very rural and could not be accessed by land.

Three Solano County Sheriff Deputies who initially entered the boat to inspect the scene were potentially exposed to hazardous vapors and odors and later went to a local hospital to be medically cleared. All three Deputies were released after being examined and have shown no signs of illness due to their potential exposure.

The public needs to be aware that clandestine labs and the components and chemicals used in these labs are extremely dangerous to public safety. Exposure to these types of chemicals can cause serious bodily injury or death at any time. Anyone who suspects narcotics manufacturing or activity is asked to contact their local law enforcement agency immediately.

On Tuesday 11-26-13 Agents from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) were brought to the scene and discovered a clandestine lab with several chemicals used to manufacture methamphetamine on the boat. The chemicals and clandestine lab components were immediately secured by personnel from the DEA so the boat could be towed safely to the US Coast Guard Station in Rio Vista. Once the boat reached the US Coast Guard Station personnel from the DEA removed the clandestine lab components and associated chemicals from the boat. DEA personnel also removed the bodies of the two deceased males onboard and the Solano County Coroner's Office Investigators took possession of the bodies.

*Dedicated to Community Service*

The male subjects found deceased on the boat were identified as 72 year old **Gary Lee Cooper** out of Concord and 49 year old **James Eugene McRae** out of Martinez.

Due to the toxic nature of the clandestine lab equipment and chemicals associated with the manufacturing of methamphetamine that were found on the boat, the boat is being held until it can be inspected and cleared by environmental professionals. The investigation into the cause of death of Gary Cooper and James McRae is on-going and an autopsy will be scheduled in the coming week. Anyone with information regarding this case is asked to contact the Solano County Sheriff's Office at (707)421-7090.

If you have any additional questions, I can be reached at the phone numbers listed below.

*Daryl P Snedeker Deputy Sheriff\Public Information Officer*  
*Solano County Sheriff's Office*  
*530 Union Ave., Suite 100*  
*Fairfield, CA 94533*  
*Desk: (707)784-7511*  
*Cellular: (707) 398-8261*  
**Email:** [dpsnedeker@solanocounty.com](mailto:dpsnedeker@solanocounty.com)