



Warren C. Evans
Sheriff

News Release

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Undercover sting nets \$300,000 in suspected stolen & counterfeit merchandise

◆ *Dearborn men allegedly fenced TVs, knock-off clothing at 2 Detroit stores*

Wayne County Sheriff's Deputies and Prosecutors, along with investigators for the Macy's department store and other local police agencies, have shut down a major fencing operation, Sheriff Warren Evans and Prosecutor Kym Worthy announced today. They say that employees at two Detroit stores had been purchasing goods stolen from Macy's for pennies on the dollar then reselling them along with counterfeit items at their own small independent locations in Detroit.

Last week, deputies raided "Da Hook Up" and "Good Fellas," two clothing stores where they recovered more than \$300,000 worth of stolen and counterfeit items. At the time of the raid, investigators arrested store employees Mohammed Ali Aoun, 22, and his brother, Ibrahim Abdul-Hussein Aoun, 35, both of Dearborn.

"For most people, the Holiday season is a time of unselfish giving. Unfortunately, for these two men, it is a time of selfish greed," Evans said. "Not only were they promoting shoplifting from larger stores, they were selling their own customers knock off products at name brand prices."

Seized in a raid at the Good Fellas store Wednesday were 11 large screen televisions the brothers had just purchased from an undercover sheriff's deputy for \$3,000 - after the officer had stated the TVs were stolen. Also seized was nearly \$80,000 in suspected stolen merchandise from Macy's, along with two semi-automatic 9mm handguns.

Seized from inside Da Hook Up was 1,792 pair of counterfeit NIKE brand shoes with a retail value of approximately \$161,280.00, along with numerous boxes of counterfeit clothing with a retail value of approximately \$59,000.00 and one handgun.

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Investigators from a Wayne County task force that also includes the police departments of Harper Woods and the five Grosse Pointe communities and National Insurance Crime Bureau, were acting on a tip that individuals who shoplifted from Macy's stores in the area were bringing the merchandise to the Aoun brothers. According to tipsters, the brothers would purchase the items for pennies on the dollar then sell them at a substantial markup.

After the undercover officer made his first sale to Mohammed Aoun, the officer received a call from him, providing the officer a "wish list" of additional items he wanted him to bring next time, Evans said.

Among the items stolen from Macy's and recovered during the raid was designer clothing and cologne. Investigators are trying to determine whether the owner of the store was directly involved in the fraud.

Both brothers have been charged with Receiving and Concealing Stolen Property and Possession/Sale/Distribution of Counterfeit Merchandise and have been released on bond.