

## Police find 135 pounds of alleged pot

Three women are facing drug charges after police conducting a routine search at the Grand Junction bus station uncovered nearly 135 pounds of suspected marijuana in their luggage.

Officers with the Grand Valley Joint Drug Task Force checked a bus bound for New York from Los Angeles last Thursday while it was stopped at the Greyhound bus station, 230 S. Fifth St., and had a police K-9 sniff for drugs in passengers' luggage.

The task force routinely checks for drugs at the bus station, because Interstate 70 can serve as a major drug-trafficking route.

Police boarded the bus while it was being serviced and asked passengers for permission to search their bags.

After receiving consent, officers found 111 pounds of marijuana in three bags belonging to Floribeth Reyes, 20, of Southgate, Calif., and Perla Montenegro, 21, of Bedrock, Calif., according to an arrest affidavit. The two women were traveling together from Los Angeles to New York.

When questioned, Reyes and Montenegro denied

knowledge of the marijuana in their luggage, with Reyes claiming Greyhound employees placed the drugs there.

Both women said they packed their bags themselves and clothes they had packed were missing from the luggage, according to the affidavit.

Reyes and Montenegro were arrested and booked into the Mesa County Jail on suspicion of possession of more than eight ounces of marijuana and possession of marijuana with intent to distribute. They could also face special-offender charges alleging they imported the drugs into the state.

Both are being held on \$100,000 bond.

Police also arrested Joan Rankine, 35, of Toronto, Ontario, on the same bus after a K-9 detected the odor of marijuana in one of her bags. Officers found 23.5 pounds of suspected marijuana in her bags.

After initially claiming ownership of the luggage in which the marijuana was found, Rankine denied it and said she had a different bag, according to an arrest affidavit. She said she did not know how her baggage claim ticket matched the ticket on the



bag in which the marijuana was found.

Rankine claimed she had flown from Canada to Tucson, Ariz., then took a bus to Las Vegas. When contacted by police, her husband said Rankine was flying directly to Las Vegas from Canada.

Rankine was jailed on suspicion of possession of more than eight ounces of marijuana and possession of marijuana with intent to distribute. She is being held on \$25,000 bond.

Charges will be filed against the three women Feb. 21.