

On 15 November, 2021, a Kerr County deputy responded to a report of a reckless driver traveling eastbound on Interstate 10. The driver was reported traveling at a high rate of speed with persons possibly lying in the bed of the pickup. The deputy located the Ford pickup and observed the pickup traveling at a high rate of speed. The vehicle exited the interstate and pulled into the Shell convenience store located on Sidney Baker just south of Interstate 10.

The deputy made contact with the driver, later identified as Adrian Noel Rangel, and immediately observed multiple Hispanic males lying in the bed of the pickup and also in the cab of the pickup. As the deputy was interviewing Mr. Rangel, several of the Hispanic males began exiting the pickup and fleeing on foot. Five of the Hispanic males obeyed commands given by the deputy and remained inside the bed of the pickup. Additional Kerr County deputies and Kerrville Police Department patrol officers arrived to assist in conducting a search of the area to attempt to locate the fleeing illegal immigrants.

Shortly thereafter, employees of a nearby business reported a Hispanic male hiding in the area, later picked up by a gold Chevrolet pickup. The gold pickup began traveling eastbound on Interstate 10, where it was stopped by a KPD patrol officer and a KCSO deputy. The driver was identified as Kristine Nicole Gragg and the passenger was identified as one of the fleeing illegal immigrants from the earlier traffic stop. A further investigation by the KCSO Criminal Investigation Division revealed that Gragg had been working with Rangel in the illegal smuggling of persons. Gragg had received instructions to return to Kerrville and pick up the illegal immigrants that had fled from the earlier traffic stop.

Adrian Noel Rangel, 37, of Austin, was arrested on twelve counts of Human Smuggling, a third-degree felony. Mr. Rangel was booked into the Kerr County Jail, where he was held on \$360,000 bond.

Kristine Nicole Gragg, 43, of Pflugerville, was arrested on one count of Human Smuggling, one charge of Possession of a Controlled Substance PG1 >=4G<200G, and one count of Prohibited Substance or Item in a Correctional Facility. Gragg is being held on a \$50,000 bond.

Six illegal immigrants were detained and later released to the Border Patrol. Additional charges may be added as this investigation continues. As in all criminal cases, charges may be added or modified prior to trial, and all suspects are innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

“Again this week, human smuggling is touching Kerr County, putting the lives of everyone involved at risk,” said Sheriff Larry Leitha. “The criminal organizations at the center of these cases are well-orchestrated and becoming more brazen in their disregard for public safety. We appreciate the long hours of work by our KCSO deputies and investigators, and again thank the Kerrville Police Department for their assistance.”

