Fisherman’s big catch lands him in jail on drug charges

By Timothy Beacham
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NEW IBERIA — A commercial fisherman who might have thought he had made the biggest catch of his life was arrested on drug-related charges here Tuesday.

State Trooper John Fusilier said more than 70 pounds of cocaine were seized from the home of an Iberia Parish commercial fisherman Ronald J. Broussard, 41, 1009 Adolph Road.

Broussard was charged with possession of cocaine with intent to distribute after police raided his home on a tip from another police department.

Fusilier said that the bust stemmed from an arrest made by Gretna police last week.

Gretna narcotics agents arrested Michael J. Hennessey, Jr., 20, 101 Fairfax Apt. B, Lafayette, after he attempted to sell undercover agents a kilo of cocaine. He was charged with distribution of cocaine.

The Gretna agents got information from Hennessey which led them to believe that the kilo was a small portion of a larger stash of the narcotic outside their jurisdiction in New Iberia.

State police were contacted and, working with the Gretna division as well as the New Iberia Sheriff’s Department, they located the 33.15 kilos of cocaine wrapped in dull yellow plastic in Broussard’s home.

The packages, still specked with bits of sand, were found hidden in various places throughout the home.

Fusilier said Broussard told police that he and Hennessey found the cocaine on a beach in Vermilion Parish while running crab traps.

Ronald J. Broussard

Officials speculate that the drugs were either dropped from an airplane or lost from a boat during the recent storm activity in the Gulf of Mexico.