



CONTACT NUMBER: 815-987-4444

November 12, 2004

**ROCKFORD MAN SENTENCED TO 186 MONTHS IN FEDERAL PRISON AS AN
"ARMED CAREER CRIMINAL" ILLEGALLY POSSESSING FIREARMS**

ROCKFORD – PATRICK J. FITZGERALD, United States Attorney for the Northern District of Illinois; ANDREW L. TRAVER, Special Agent-In-Charge of the Chicago Office of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF); PAUL A. LOGLI, Winnebago County State's Attorney; and STEVEN PUGH, Chief of the Rockford Police Department, today made the following announcement:

United States District Judge Philip G. Reinhard today sentenced **KEVIN KIRKWOOD**, 49 (DOB: 8/14/1955), who formerly resided at 4120 Auburn Street, #111, Rockford, Illinois, to 186 months in federal prison without parole for being an "armed career criminal" illegally possessing two firearms. Kirkwood was also sentenced to five years of supervised release following his release from prison.

At the time of his guilty plea on August 31, 2004, Kirkwood admitted that at approximately 3:20 a.m. on November 6, 2003, he knocked on the window of an apartment on Auburn Street in Rockford and asked the occupants if he could use their telephone because he had been injured. Kirkwood admitted that at that time he was holding two firearms, a Colt .45 caliber handgun and a Davis Industries .380 caliber handgun. Kirkwood further acknowledged in his plea agreement that after speaking outside with one of the occupants, he entered the building and shortly thereafter was located by police officers in the hallway of the building while still in possession of both handguns. Kirkwood was then arrested by the Rockford Police Department. Kirkwood had previously been convicted of a felony.

First charged by the Winnebago County States Attorney's Office under state law, Kirkwood was transferred to federal court where he was charged under tough federal firearms laws as part of the Project Safe Neighborhoods program. Project Safe Neighborhoods is an intensive, cooperative effort between local, state, and federal law enforcement to attack gun crimes. The cornerstone of the program is that every state defendant with a gun will be reviewed for possible federal prosecution in order to obtain the harshest penalties for the worst offenders. Additional information about Project Safe Neighborhoods may be found at www.psn.gov.

The case was investigated by the Rockford Office of the ATF, and the Rockford Police Department. The case was prosecuted in federal court by Assistant United States Attorney Joseph C. Pedersen.

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