



Department of Justice

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TWO MORE CASES INVOLVING “STRAW PURCHASES” OF WEAPONS

ATLANTA, GA - United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates today announced two more cases, with a total of six defendants, in cases of so-called “lying and buying” or “straw purchases” of weapons:

● ANTHONY VINCENT CARTMAN, 40, of Marietta, Georgia, ERRON DENISE LOVE-MORGAN, 39, of Marietta, Georgia; TCHAKA JAMAL SHIELDS, 34, of Marietta, Georgia, and CASITA QWANET WASHINGTON, 34, of Lilburn, Georgia, were indicted today by a federal grand jury on charges of firearms trafficking. The four defendants will be scheduled for an initial appearance/bond hearing/arraignment within a few weeks on a date not yet set by the Court.

● EURBY DAJOE FITZHUGH, 33, of West Haverstraw, New York, and RICHARD CHARLES YOUNG, II, 21, of Palmetto, Georgia, pleaded guilty today in a separate case in federal court to charges related to their role in a conspiracy to lie to a firearms dealer for the purpose of illegally buying firearms for a convicted felon. As a result of the conspiracy, often known as a “lying and buying” scheme, the defendants illegally acquired seven firearms from a gun dealer in Riverdale, Georgia, in August, 2010. FITZHUGH and YOUNG are scheduled to be sentenced on March 2, 2011, before Senior United States District Court Judge J. Owen Forrester.

United States Attorney Sally Quillian Yates said, “These cases are another reminder that Georgia is the source state for far too many illegal guns. In the case of the guilty pleas being taken today, the defendants illegally purchased seven handguns within just a couple of days. Unfortunately, those firearms have not been recovered. In the other case, the indictment alleges a similar scheme of “lying and buying,” with weapons quickly changing hands, and all of these defendants face federal prison.”

Special Agent in Charge Gregory K. Gant, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), Atlanta Field Division, said, “The court actions today and subsequent prosecution are further indications that we must be diligent. Intentionally supplying false information to a federally licensed firearms dealer with the intent to place these guns in the hands of persons prohibited from having them and/or other criminals is a

serious criminal offense. Investigative experience shows us that in many instances these firearms end up in the hands of violent criminals, who use them to victimize innocent citizens.”

According to United States Attorney Yates, the indictment and information presented in court:

● From March to May 2009, CARTMAN, SHIELDS, LOVE-MORGAN, and WASHINGTON were allegedly involved in a “lying-and-buying,” straw-purchasing scheme, with over a dozen firearms being purchased illegally. Specifically, on eight separate occasions, LOVE-MORGAN and WASHINGTON purchased approximately 15 firearms from federally licensed firearms dealers in Georgia on behalf of CARTMAN and SHIELDS, both of whom are persons prohibited from owning firearms. In allegedly making those purchases, LOVE-MORGAN and WASHINGTON lied on a “Firearms Transaction Record” by swearing that they were the actual buyers of the firearms, when in fact, the intended buyers were CARTMAN and SHIELDS. At least two of the weapons were recovered later by law enforcement officers in Boston, Massachusetts, in the hands of other individuals. Today’s indictment charges eight counts of straw-purchasing firearms.

● On August 3, 2010, FITZHUGH, a convicted felon, accompanied YOUNG into a federal firearms licensee business in Riverdale, Georgia. FITZHUGH told a store employee that YOUNG wanted to purchase firearms. YOUNG, who has no previous criminal record, passed the required criminal background check and purchased three .380 caliber pistols. As part of the purchase, YOUNG certified that he was the actual buyer of the firearms. Two days later, on August 5, 2010, the pair returned to the store. YOUNG purchased four identical 9mm pistols, again stating that he was the actual buyer. ATF was called to investigate the purchases after store employees became suspicious. During the ATF’s investigation, agents located a bill of sale documenting a transfer of four of the pistols from YOUNG to FITZHUGH on August 6, 2010. During today’s plea hearing, FITZHUGH admitted in court that he actually paid for all seven firearms and was the true purchaser.

All defendants in these cases face a maximum sentence of 5 years for the conspiracy and a maximum sentence of 10 years for causing false information to be recorded in the records of a federal firearms licensee. FITZHUGH faces an additional sentence of up to 10 years for possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. Each count also carries a maximum fine of \$250,000. In determining the actual sentence, the Court will consider the United States Sentencing Guidelines, which are not binding but provide appropriate sentencing ranges for most offenders.

Members of the public are reminded that the indictment contains only allegations. A defendant is presumed innocent of the charges and it will be the government’s burden to prove a defendant’s guilt beyond a reasonable doubt at trial.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (“ATF”).

Assistant United States Attorney Matthew Jackson is prosecuting the Cartman et al. case, and Assistant United States Attorney Brent Alan Gray is prosecuting the Fitzhugh et al. case.

For further information please contact Sally Q. Yates, United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia is www.justice.gov/usao/gan.