



PRESS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 24, 2012

Task Force led Heroin/Firearm Investigation nets Twenty-One Convictions, Recovery of Nineteen Guns

CLARKSBURG, WEST VIRGINIA — The United States Attorney's office, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF), the Harrison County Sheriff's Department, the Clarksburg Police Department, and the Bridgeport Police Department announced today that all 21 defendants that were arrested during a heroin and firearm roundup last year have been convicted and sentenced.

U.S. Attorney William J. Ihlenfeld, II, stated that each of the defendants indicted last April have entered pleas of guilty and have been sentenced by United States District Court Judge Irene Keeley. The drug trafficking investigation was spearheaded by the Harrison County Drug and Violent Crimes Task Force, while the ATF led the associated firearms trafficking investigation. The action taken by the task force and the ATF was in response to numerous citizen complaints about heroin trafficking in the North View Section of Clarksburg. The drug dealers were identified through intelligence gathering, and Task Force officers were able to develop confidential informants to make controlled buys from the dealers. In addition to North View, the drug investigation was conducted in Clarksburg, Nutter Fort, and Bridgeport. Eight separate heroin users or distributors sold a total of nineteen guns to a task force officer working in an undercover capacity; sixteen of those firearms were confirmed to have been stolen.

"Heroin is a terribly destructive substance that can tear apart a community. It's a significant contributor to property crimes, including home invasions, and thus we have to be extremely aggressive in fighting back against it," said U.S. Attorney Ihlenfeld.

"This case is what I call a 'Community Impact' prosecution, because it put a significant dent in the heroin trade in Harrison County, and it removed nineteen firearms from the hands of drug dealers. The investigation was successful because of the outstanding work of the task force and the ATF. When all of these departments work together as a team great things can happen," said Ihlenfeld.

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Dewayne Haddix, Resident Agent in Charge of the ATF for Clarksburg and Wheeling, was impressed with the cooperative efforts of the agencies involved.

ATF Special Agent in Charge Paul J. Vido said, “ The long term investigations show the hard work of our agents and law enforcement partners. As a result of the outstanding cooperation between ATF, Clarksburg Police Department, and the Harrison Drug and Violent Crime Task Force we were able to make a positive impact on violent crime and prevent stolen firearms from reaching the streets in our community. With the help of the courts these criminals have been removed from the streets of Harrison County.”

“It is always a good thing when we get convictions and get drugs and drug dealers off the street. The Task Force, ATF and the US Attorney’s Office did an excellent job and it is always great when we can have a partnership to work together on this type of investigation,” said Clarksburg Police Chief Marshall Goff.

“I was pleased from the beginning to end with the Northview incident with regards to the arrest/conviction/prosecution of these individuals,” said Harrison County Sheriff Albert Marano.

“We cannot and will not tolerate those individuals who come into our neighborhoods seeking to peddle their illegal drugs. Families are being destroyed and lives are being lost. Our staff and the staff of the Harrison County Narcotics and Violent Crime Task Force will seek out these offenders and prosecute them to the fullest extent of the law. We appreciate the support that we receive from our Federal and State prosecutors and our administration to make this happen,” said Bridgeport Police Chief John Walker.

All of the cases were prosecuted by Shawn Morgan, chief of the criminal division for the United States Attorney’s Office.

Defendant & Convictions	Sentence
<p>Chasty Anderson Age 22 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Conspiracy to Distribute Heroin; Possessing, Concealing and Disposing of Stolen Firearms</i></p>	<p>12 months and 1 day imprisonment consecutive to a state probation violation sentence, followed by 3 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Brandon Baxter Age 24 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Conspiracy to Distribute Heroin</i></p>	<p>120 days imprisonment followed by 3 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Joseph Dale Bennett Age 27 of Cambria, WV</p> <p><i>Unlawful Drug User/Addict in Possession of Firearms; Possession with Intent to Distribute Heroin</i></p>	<p>37 months imprisonment on each count, to be served concurrently, followed by 3 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Matthew E. Boone Age 27 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Aiding and Abetting the Distribution of Heroin</i></p>	<p>12 months imprisonment followed by 3 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Justin Brian Carpenter Age 28 of Shinnston, WV</p> <p><i>Distribution of Heroin</i></p>	<p>10 months federal imprisonment consecutive to 1-10 year state sentence followed by 3 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Michael Ross Cawthon Age 24 of Gassaway, WV</p> <p><i>Distribution of Heroin within 1,000 feet of a Protected Location</i></p>	<p>27 months imprisonment followed by 6 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Brittany Kirby Craig Age 23 of Fairmont, WV</p> <p><i>Conspiracy to Distribute less than 100 grams of Heroin</i></p>	<p>4 months imprisonment consecutive to state sentence of 1-15 years followed by 4 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Collin Ellis Age 23 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Aiding and abetting Distribution of Heroin; Possession and Disposal of Stolen Firearm</i></p>	<p>24 months imprisonment on each count to be served concurrently, followed by 3 years of supervised release</p>

<p>Adam Scott Freeman Age 25 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Felon in Possession of Firearm</i></p>	<p>46 months imprisonment to be served consecutively to 10-year state sentence, followed by 3 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Jeffrey Lynn Freeman Age 30 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Possession of Firearm by Unlawful Drug User/Addict</i></p>	<p>37 months imprisonment to be served consecutively to 1-15 year state sentence, followed by 3 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Eric James Golden Age 27 of Horner, WV</p> <p><i>Distribution of Heroin within 1,000 feet of a Protected Location</i></p>	<p>15 months imprisonment followed by 6 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Michael Loren Griffith Age 25 of Fairmont, WV</p> <p><i>Felon in Possession of a Firearm</i></p>	<p>30 months imprisonment to be served consecutively to federal supervised release violation, followed by 3 years of additional supervised release</p>
<p>Destiny Jenkins Age 30 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Distribution of Heroin within 1,000 feet of a Protected Location</i></p>	<p>18 months imprisonment followed by 6 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Robert Lee Kerby Age 26 of Bridgeport, WV</p> <p><i>Possession with Intent to Distribute Heroin</i></p>	<p>5 years probation, with 6 months of home detention</p>
<p>Nancy J. Nicholas Age 46 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Distribution of Heroin within 1,000 feet of a Protected Location</i></p>	<p>12 months and 1 day imprisonment followed by 6 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Thomas Michael Paugh Age 26 of Mount Clare, WV</p> <p><i>Conspiracy to Traffic in Stolen Firearms</i></p>	<p>33 months imprisonment followed by 3 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Jonathan M. Peet Age 26 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Distribution of Heroin</i></p>	<p>5 years probation</p>

<p>Patrick James Peet Age 28 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Aiding and Abetting Distribution of Heroin within 1,000 feet of a Protected Location</i></p>	<p>8 months imprisonment followed by 3 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Nikki Pierce Age 19 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Aiding and Abetting Distribution of Heroin within 1,000 feet of a Protected Location; Aiding and Abetting Possession and Disposal of Stolen Firearm</i></p>	<p>18 months imprisonment on each count to be served concurrently, followed by 6 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Tausha Pierce Age 24 of Clarksburg, WV</p> <p><i>Aiding and Abetting Distribution of Heroin within 1,000 feet of a Protected Location; Aiding and Abetting Possession and Disposal of Stolen Firearm</i></p>	<p>15 months imprisonment on each count to be served concurrently, followed by 6 years of supervised release</p>
<p>Joseph Boyd Swiger Age 31 of Jane Lew, WV</p> <p><i>Distribution of Heroin within 1,000 feet of a Protected Location</i></p>	<p>15 months imprisonment followed by 6 years of supervised release</p>