

Woman, boyfriend accused of selling heroin

A local woman and her boyfriend have been arrested, accused of selling heroin.

April L. Rice, 39, of 28 Westwood Drive, New London, and Ryan M. McWilliams, 26, of 2678 Jennings Road, New London, each must post a \$10,000 bond before being released from the Huron County Jail. Norwalk Assistant Law Director T. Douglas Clifford filed one count each of trafficking in heroin against both suspects Friday.

Rice and McWilliams were arrested during a traffic stop Thursday at the intersection of U.S. 224 and Ohio 60 south of New London. Huron County Sheriff's Capt. Bob McLaughlin said their arrests came after an alleged heroin transaction in the 3700 block of U.S. 224 in Greenwich.

"She drove the vehicle, which we towed ... and inventoried," McLaughlin said about Rice. "She purchased it not long ago."

Investigators are expected to obtain a warrant to search the white Ford Taurus for heroin and related drug paraphernalia, McLaughlin said.

When investigators used a search warrant at Rice's home, they found and seized heroin-related drug paraphernalia, which will be analyzed at a crime lab in Mansfield, McLaughlin said. Deputies also found McWilliams' wallet and other personal belongings in the master bedroom, the sheriff's captain said.

The arrests were part of a METRICH investigation, which started about mid-February. METRICH is a 10-county drug task force; McLaughlin is the Huron County contact.

McLaughlin credited Detective Steve Shupp with "developing information" after authorities received a tip about Rice reportedly selling heroin to someone. New London Police Officer Joe Hicks assisted Shupp with the investigation.

Shupp, Huron County Sheriff's Cpl. Jeff Kerber and Deputies Tod Wagner and Josh Querin assisted with Thursday's traffic stop.

The two defendants have separate preliminary hearings scheduled for Tuesday in Norwalk Municipal Court. If Rice or McWilliams choose to waive their right to have evidence presented by the state, their cases will be transferred to Huron County Common Pleas Court for a possible grand jury indictment.

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