

## **Federal indictments charge 39 with drug trafficking in Mansfield**

Local law enforcement and federal agents conducted a drug sweep early Wednesday morning throughout the city after 39 people were indicted in federal court on drug charges.

The charges are all in connection with two separate conspiracies to obtain drugs from out of state and sell them in Mansfield.

During the searches, investigators seized more than 2.2 pounds of cocaine, approximately 550 grams of heroin, more than 2.2 pounds of marijuana, 12 firearms and more than \$12,000.00 in U.S. currency. The numbers are preliminary as there are still on-going searches, according to Lt. Joe Petrycki, commander of METRICH.

As of 3:45 p.m. Wednesday, 26 out of the 39 suspects had been taken into custody on federal drug-related indictments and were to be transported to Cleveland for their initial court appearance, Petrycki said.

According to a press release issued by the US Department of Justice during an 11 a.m. press conference at the Richland County Sheriff's Office, 18 people are charged in a 41-count indictment with conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute heroin. They are: Lennon Hayes, 44; Demond Steele, 45; Tara Jones, 29; Michael Ginn, 28; Steve Hollins, 42; Cupree Howard, 39; Marcus Garmon, 32; Ashley Kriedman-Crider, 28; Rickell Fields, 24; Marrico King, 40; Terrance Jone 27; Natasha Brookins, 34; James Alexander, 32; Vanessa Oliver, 39; and Jacquis Mordica, 26, all of Mansfield; Roberto Calderon, 36, of Chicago; Edward Jones, 39, of Chicago; and Mazzarney Hardy, 39, of Maywood, Illinois;

Twenty-one people were charged in connection with a different case in a 33-count indictment with conspiracy with intent to distribute heroin, crack cocaine, cocaine and marijuana, according to the press release. They are Kevin Burton, 41; Antoine Jefferson, 39; Lewis Pinkston Jr., 40; Brian Nowell, 44; Dorthea Burton, 34; Ericka Fortner, 27; Shadawn Smith, 25; Corey Motley, 36; Bronson Jones, 43; Deon Gamble, 34; Willie Feagin, 62; Jon Martel Jefferson, 30; Keith Maddox, 36; Amanda Huffman, 28; Michael Sloan, 60; Shantia Crawford, 27; Cardoves Haslett, 34; Shakela Williams, 23; and Joe Ware, 20, all of Mansfield; Damon Slaughter, 41, of Westerville; and Larry Ferguson, 41, of Louisville, Kentucky.

Thirty-nine people were indicted in federal court for their roles in two separate conspiracies to obtain large amounts of heroin, and in some cases, other drugs, from out of state and sell the drugs in Mansfield, law officials said Wednesday Lou Whitmire News Journal video

In one conspiracy, Lennon Hayes and Edward Jones are accused of obtaining large amounts of heroin from Roberto Calderon in Chicago and selling it in Mansfield between June 2015 and present, according to the press release. In the second conspiracy, heroin, cocaine and marijuana were obtained from suppliers in Columbus and California, then resold in Mansfield and Louisville, Kentucky.

"These groups brought heroin into Mansfield from out of state, sold it from houses in neighborhoods with families and used firearms to protect their operations, US Attorney Justin Hardman said in the release. "Law enforcement did a tremendous job in dismantling these organizations."

In the first conspiracy, Hayes and Jones are accused of selling the heroin from Chicago to other dealers, according to the indictment. Mansfield residences used to store and sell the heroin, according to the indictment, were 575 Crescent Ave., 278 S. Main St., 371 Second Ave., 743 Bowman Ave. and 204 Linden Road.

39 people were indicted in federal court in connection with two separate conspiracies to obtain drugs from out of state and sell them in Mansfield. (Photo: Lou Whitmire/News Journal)

The indictment in the second conspiracy accuses Kevin Burton of obtaining large amounts of cocaine from Antoine Jefferson, then selling the cocaine and cooking some of it into crack cocaine. Burton and Lewis Pinkston also obtained large amounts of heroin from Damon Slaughter in Columbus, according to the indictment.

Mansfield residences used for storing and selling drugs in the second conspiracy are 160 Reba Ave., 642 Johns Ave., 461 Busch Ave., 708 Carol Lane, 1520 Silver Lane and 35 W. Arch St., according to the indictment.

The METRICH Enforcement Unit, the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Drug Enforcement Agency received assistance from the Allied Special Operations Response Team, the Ohio State Highway Patrol SRT, Mount Vernon Police Department SWAT, the Crawford County Special Response Team, the Richland County Sheriff's Office, the U.S. Marshal's Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force (NOVFTF), the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Richland County Prosecutor's Office and numerous other law enforcement agencies throughout the METRICH region.

The indictments resulted from investigations by the FBI, Drug Enforcement Administration, METRICH Enforcement Task Force, Mansfield Police Department, Richland County Sheriff's Office and the U.S. Marshal Service, with assistance from the Richland County Prosecutor's Office, according to the press release.

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