

Three charged following execution of search warrants

Three people have been charged with felony drug crimes after law enforcement carried out two search warrants last week, according to the METRICH-MARMET Drug Task Force.

Chelsea N. Pierce, 28, and Terell J. Steen, 42, both of Marion, were each charged Monday with one count of trafficking of cocaine and one count of possession of cocaine, both first-degree felonies, in Marion Municipal Court, according to online court records and a press release issued by METRICH-MARMET.

The two were taken into custody on Friday after METRICH-MARMET agents, with help from the Marion County Sheriff's Office, allegedly found 71 grams of suspected crack cocaine during a search of a hotel room at America's Best Value Inn in Marion, according to the press release and to Marion Police Lt. Chris Adkins.

Adkins said Pierce and Steen were in the hotel room at the time of the search, where he said money, digital scales and other items associated with drug trafficking were also seized.

They each have preliminary hearings scheduled for 8:30 a.m. Monday, May 18, according to online court records.

In a different case, Ernest J. Pope, 35, of Marion, was also charged Monday with one count of aggravated possession of drugs, a second-degree felony, and one count of having weapons while under disability, a third-degree felony, in Marion Municipal Court, following a METRICH-MARMET search of a North Prospect Street home, according to online court records and the release.

Law enforcement obtained a search warrant for the residence, Adkins said, after he alleged Pope was seen in a video posted to Facebook holding a gun. Adkins said Pope, as a convicted felon, is prohibited from possessing.

Pope is under parole supervision after having been released in 2018 from prison, where he served time for several drug-related convictions from 2006, according to the Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction.

Adkins alleged agents found nearly 170 Ecstasy pills and a loaded firearm "in close proximity" in a bedroom at the home in the 460 block of North Prospect Street, where he said Pope sometimes stayed.

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