

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



City of Duluth - Police Department

Mike Ceynowa, Chief of Police
2030 North Arlington Avenue • Duluth, Minnesota 55811 •
www.duluthmn.gov

*For more information contact:
Public Information Officer, Mattie Hjelseth at (218) 730-5434 or
mhjelseth@duluthmn.gov*

DATE: 12/6/2022

SUBJECT: Lake Superior Violent Offender Task Force Dismantle Drug Trafficking Organization

BY: Mattie Hjelseth, Duluth Police Department Public Information Officer

NATURE OF INCIDENT:

CASE NO.:

INCIDENT DATE:

INCIDENT TIME:

INCIDENT LOCATION:

Lake Superior Violent Offender Task Force Dismantle Drug Trafficking Organization

Criminal complaints filed in St. Louis County District Court over the past couple of months charged 17 alleged members of a Duluth/Superior based Drug Trafficking Organization (DTO) with participating in a criminal organization that imported substantial quantities of a fentanyl/heroin mix, a methamphetamine/fentanyl mix, methamphetamine, and several other controlled substances into the Duluth/Superior area. The illicit drugs were then distributed by DTO members who sold drugs throughout Duluth, Superior, Cloquet, Fond Du Lac Reservation, and other areas in St. Louis, Carlton, and Douglas Counties in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

The criminal activity conducted by the DTO was uncovered by an investigation from members of the Lake Superior Violent Offender Task Force (LSVOTF). Task Force members have been investigating the DTO since July 2022.

"The outstanding work performed by members of the Lake Superior Violent Offender Task Force and other law enforcement agencies during this extensive operation is an essential part in keeping the Northland clean from opioids and free of violent offenders," said Deputy Chief Nick Lukovsky. "I'm extremely proud of all those involved for their dedication in continuing to provide a safe Northland for all."

During the course of the investigation, law enforcement agencies executed over 50 search warrants, seized nine firearms, a homemade explosive, a firearm "Switch", which turns a semi-automatic handgun into a fully automatic weapon, 10 vehicles, and \$74,377 in U.S. currency. Also seized during the investigation was 8509 grams of a meth-fentanyl mix, with a total street value of \$850,914; 204 grams of fentanyl, with a total street value of \$37,740; 1759 grams of methamphetamine, which has a total street value of \$131,925; along with several other illegal drugs.

"Year to date in 2022, there have been 46 opioid overdose deaths and another 466 non-lethal opioid overdoses in St. Louis County," said Duluth Police Chief Mike Ceynowa. "Dismantling any Drug Trafficking Organization limits the source of supply of these fatal opioids. This is just one piece to help save lives. Continued work with those suffering from Substance Use Disorder to find access to treatment is still needed."

After a significant disruption in the supply of opioids, there is a trend for those facing addiction to seek help. Confidential help is available through the Substance Use Response Team (SURT). You can contact SURT at (218)-730-4009.

"The opioid epidemic continues to be a significant issue in our Task Force area," said Task Force Commander Chad Nagorski. "I am extremely proud of the members of the Lake Superior Violent Offender Task Force who worked tirelessly during this investigation, who missed many family events and holidays working to hold the members of this DTO accountable for profiting off community members who are experiencing Substance Use Disorder."

Arrests were carried out last week in the City of Superior and the City of Duluth as part of the multi-jurisdictional operation. So far, 17 members of the DTO have been arrested and five of those individuals were released.

The following individuals have been arrested; 30-year-old Duluth resident, Nicholas VanHolbeck, 36-year-old Maple Grove resident Marshaun Brown, 45-year-old Duluth resident Steven Green, 34-year-old Duluth resident Charlice Buck, 31-year-old Duluth resident, Joseph Felver, 30-year-old Duluth resident Nicholas Wosmek, 37-year-old Duluth resident Glenda Cronin, 40-year-old Duluth resident Zachary Bissell, 32-year-old Duluth resident Chad Jasper, 27-year-old Minneapolis resident Aaron Ellerman, 28-year-old Duluth resident Kyle Davis, and 25-year-old Duluth resident Brodey Jensen.

“My deepest gratitude to the members of the Lake Superior Violent Offender Task Force and prosecutor Nichole Carter for their outstanding work in building a case that will bring the members of this Drug Trafficking Organization to justice and prevent over 20 pounds of methamphetamine laced with fentanyl and other illegal drugs from being distributed in our communities,” said County Attorney Kim Maki. “While the work of the Task Force and our local office is critical to stopping Drug Trafficking Organizations from selling these poisonous substances to our fellow citizens, the St. Louis County Attorney’s Office is also committed to working with the Minnesota County Attorney’s Association to advocate for stricter laws regarding the possession and sale of fentanyl.”

This is still an ongoing investigation and there are several individuals involved in the DTO that the LSVOTF is actively pursuing.

Details on the charges filed against each individual can be found in their criminal complaints.

The Duluth Police Department wants to recognize the following partner agencies for their hard work and dedication in this operation: the Lake Superior Violent Offender Task Force, the St. Louis County Attorney’s Office, the St. Louis County Sheriff’s Office, Superior Police Department, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Department of Homeland Security Investigations, the Drug Enforcement Administration, the United States Postal Inspector’s Office, and other agencies/organizations involved in this multi-jurisdictional investigation.

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**Nicholas Allen
VanHolbeck
7/18/1992**



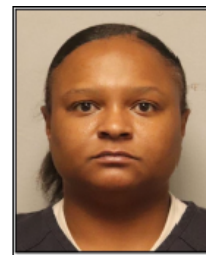
**Joseph Allen
Felver
7/16/1991**



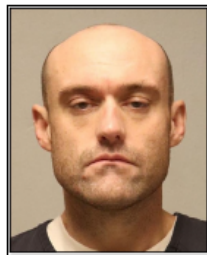
**Steven Maurice
Green
10/0/1977**



**Marshaun Deeandre
Brown
6/26/1986**



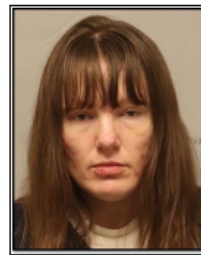
**Charlice Patrice
Buck
2/19/1988**



**Zachary Ryan
Bissell
9/10/1982**



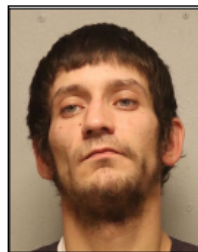
**Nicholas John
Wosmek
11/20/1992**



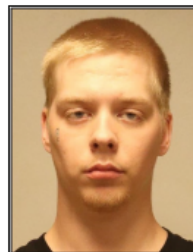
**Glenda Rae
Cronin
10/20/1985**



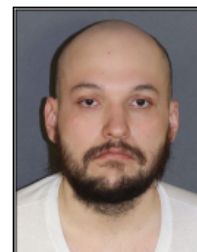
**Chad Ethan
Jasper
3/30/1990**



**Kyle Lee
Davis
7/24/1994**



**Brodey Wallace
Jensen
5/1/1997**



**Aaron Michael
Ellerman
11/7/1995**