



Department of Justice

United States Attorney John M. Bales

Eastern District of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 10, 2013
WWW.USDOJ.GOV/USAO/TXE

CONTACT: DAVILYN WALSTON
PHONE: (409) 839-2538
CELL: (409) 553-9881

AGENTS TARGET 9 INDIVIDUALS FOR DRUG VIOLATIONS

TYLER, TX – United States Attorney John M. Bales announced today that a combined task force of federal, state and local law enforcement agencies began arresting individuals in a drug trafficking enterprise in Gilmer, Texas. Arrests began on Tuesday, April 9, 2013 and continued through today.

On March 27, 2013, a federal grand jury returned a 15 count indictment charging the 9 individuals for conspiracy to distribute, possession with intent to distribute, distribution, and aiding and abetting in drug trafficking crimes. According to court documents, beginning in May, 2012, the defendants were part of a conspiracy to distribute heroin and crack cocaine in Upshur County as well as other areas of the Eastern District of Texas. The indictment resulted from a lengthy investigation by agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration, Gilmer Police Department, Gregg County CODE Unit, Kilgore Police Department's STAR Unit, and the Texas Department of Public Safety.

Seven of the nine defendants had initial appearances yesterday before United States Magistrate Judge Roy S. Payne in Texarkana, Texas. If convicted, the defendants face not less than 5 nor more than 40 years in prison, a fine not to exceed \$5,000,000, and supervised release of at least 4 years.

The defendants named in the indictment are **WILLIAM AVERY GRIFFIN, 57; LINDSEY NOEL RAWLS, 23; DENISE STEWART DRIGGERS, 56; RUBY FAYE COOPER, 55; PAUL ALLEN WIGINGTON, 55; LIDIA GAIL BROOKS OLIVARES, 33; CYNTHIA BLALOCK HALL, 51; JERRY MILTON BRYANT, 59; and, DEJUAN MARTEZ CHEATHAM, 39**, all from Gilmer, Texas.

Assistant United States Attorney Mary Ann Cozby is prosecuting this case.

A grand jury indictment is not evidence of guilt. All defendants are presumed innocent until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt in a court of law.

#####

