

NEWS RELEASE

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3 convicted at trial by DA's Drug Team; 4 others plead guilty

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Drug Team convicted three defendants at trial during the week of January 12, 2015. Another four defendants pled guilty to drug offenses. The proceedings were held before The Honorable Beecher R. Gray and The Honorable Carla N. Archie, Superior Court Judges.

Steve Gachette, 36, was tried for 1) sale of marijuana, 2) delivery of marijuana and 3) possession with the intent to sell or deliver marijuana. The jury returned verdicts of *guilty*. Judge Archie sentenced Gachette to 7-18 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. As a condition of his probation, Gachette must serve 45 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail.

Hendrick Jones, 35, was tried for 1) possession with the intent to sell or deliver cocaine, 2) possession with the intent to sell or deliver marijuana and 3) possession of drug paraphernalia. The jury found him *guilty* as charged. Judge Gray sentenced Jones to 6-17 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. As a condition of his probation, Jones must serve 15 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail.

David Brooks, 35, was tried for 1) possession of heroin and 2) possession of drug paraphernalia. The jury returned verdicts of *guilty*. Judge Gray sentenced Brooks to 6-17 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 18 months of supervised probation.

Rolando Marrero, 52, was charged with 1) trafficking in marijuana by possession, 2) manufacture of marijuana, 3) felony maintaining a dwelling for drug purposes and 4) possession of drug paraphernalia. Marrero filed a motion to suppress certain evidence seized or obtained by law enforcement, alleging violations of his legal rights. After hearing testimony and arguments from the defense and the Assistant District Attorney, Judge Gray denied Marrero's motion. Then, Marrero pled guilty as charged. Judge Gray sentenced him to 25-39 months in prison.

Another defendant facing drug charges filed a motion to suppress certain evidence seized or obtained by law enforcement, alleging violations of the defendant's legal rights. After hearing testimony and arguments from the defense and the Assistant District Attorney, Judge Archie denied the defendant's motion. The case will proceed to trial at a later date.

The following three defendants pled guilty before their cases were called for trial:

Francisco Mangandi, 41, pled guilty to possession with the intent to sell or deliver cocaine. Mangandi was sentenced to 5-15 months in prison.

Courtney Bates, 31, pled guilty to 1) possession of cocaine and 2) possession of drug paraphernalia. Bates was sentenced to 6-17 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. As one condition of his probation, Bates must serve 45 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail.

Gregory Moffitt, 31, pled guilty to possession of drug paraphernalia. Moffitt was sentenced to 60 days in the Mecklenburg County Jail; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 12 months of unsupervised probation.

Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit www.charmeckda.com. For updates and other information, "like" the DA's Office on Facebook at www.facebook.com/charmeckda and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.

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