

Tuesday, May 21st, Mark Lyle Hoke, 41, and Connie Ann Proffitt, 49, both of Boone, were arrested by US Marshals and local Police in Council Bluffs, Iowa on outstanding warrants for Manufacturing Methamphetamine in Watauga County, NC. In October 2012, Detectives from the Watauga County Sheriff's Office Special Operations Unit received information that Mark Hoke was manufacturing methamphetamine in and around Watauga County and began an investigation. Detectives began tracking Hoke's pseudoephedrine (PSE) purchases using the National Precursor Log Exchange (NPLEX) in an attempt to confirm whether or not he was Manufacturing Methamphetamine. While investigating Hoke's activities Detectives discovered other suspects purchasing PSE at or around the same time as Hoke. After tracking several suspects PSE purchases Detectives obtained arrest warrants for Hoke and others involved and attempted to arrest them. Two suspects were initially arrested, Phyllis Garlock, 48, and Sherry Miller, 57, both of Deep Gap, for Conspiracy to Manufacture Methamphetamine and Possession of Precursor Chemicals. Detectives were not able to locate Hoke to arrest him because he had fled due to warrants from a previous incident involving Boone Police, in which he was charged with Possession of Methamphetamine and Possession of Precursor Chemicals.

After a concerted effort between both Watauga County Sheriff's Office and Boone Police Department, Detectives learned that Hoke had left Watauga County with his girlfriend and co-defendant, Connie Proffitt, and were believed to be heading to Delaware, where Proffitt had family. As Detectives continued to track the PSE purchases of both Hoke and Proffitt, they learned that Proffitt was buying PSE as she and Hoke were travelling. Detectives believe Hoke wasn't purchasing PSE as part of his attempt to elude law enforcement. Records indicate that Proffitt purchased PSE in Virginia, West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois and Iowa. Detectives had been in touch with the US Marshals and requested their assistance in locating and finding Hoke and Proffitt and had been passing information along to them in regards to their suspected location. Proffitt attempted to purchase PSE at a CVS in Council Bluffs, Iowa on Sunday May 19th, but was denied. Iowa limits the amount of PSE someone can buy to 7.5 grams in a 30 day period, whereas NC has a 9 gram limit in a 30 day period. Hoke and Proffitt returned to the same CVS on Tuesday, May 21st to purchase PSE and were arrested by Council Bluffs Police and US Marshals for their outstanding arrest warrants.

Hoke faces charges in Watauga County including 2 counts of Manufacturing Methamphetamine, based on two clandestine methamphetamine laboratories, 29 counts of Possession of Precursor Chemicals with Intent to Manufacture and 62 counts of Conspiracy to Manufacture Methamphetamine while Proffitt faces up to 25 counts of Conspiracy to Manufacture Methamphetamine and 25 counts of Possession of Precursor Chemicals with Intent to Manufacture, all in Watauga County. These numbers don't include the numerous purchases of PSE and other Precursor Items in other counties and across the nation.