

Five Arrested in 2-Year Ashe Meth Probe

Written by Steve Frank

Wednesday, 19 December 2012 12:13

Ashe County Sheriff James Williams announces the arrest of five suspects, the culmination of a two-year investigation into the trafficking of methamphetamines in and around Ashe County. Three search warrants were executed on December 12th, the warrants the culmination of 2 years of work by the Ashe County Sheriff's Office narcotics investigators, along with the NCSBI. That probe identified the suspects early on as some of the largest distributors of methamphetamine in Ashe County. With the assistance of Alleghany County Sheriff's Office, Boone Police Department, DEA, ATF, and HSI, the investigation led to the seizure of approximately one half pound of methamphetamine and \$9,700.00 in US currency. The following suspects were arrested on federal charges:

- Martin Saldana, age 43 of West Jefferson NC was charged with Conspiring to Traffic More than 1500 grams of Methamphetamine and Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Crime. He is currently in the custody of the United States Marshals with no bond.

- Jose Fransisco Pina, age 45, of West Jefferson, NC was charged with Conspiring to Traffic More than 1500 Grams of Methamphetamine, Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Crime, and the Sale or Deliver of more than 50 Grams of Methamphetamine. He is currently in the custody of the United States Marshals with no bond.

- Jose Jiminez Pina, age 25, from West Jefferson NC was charged with Conspiracy to Traffic More than 1500 Grams of Methamphetamine and Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Crime. He is currently in the custody of the United States Marshals with no bond.

- Bobby Shore, age 59 from Lansing NC was charged with Conspiring to Traffic more than 1500 Grams of Methamphetamine, Possession of Ammunition in Furtherance of a Drug Crime, and the Sale or deliver of more than 50 Grams of Methamphetamine. He is currently in the custody of the United States Marshals with no bond.

- Danny Eller, age 52 from Pine Swamp NC was charged with Conspiracy to Traffic more than 1500 Grams of Methamphetamine and Possession of a Firearm in Furtherance of a Drug Crime. He is currently in the custody of the United States Marshals with no bond.

Each defendant is facing sentences of a minimum mandatory 10 years and up to a maximum of life imprisonment for the drug charges and a minimum mandatory five years for the weapons charges.

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- Russell Craven, age 54, of Jefferson, was charged on state charges of Possession of Methamphetamine and Drug Paraphernalia. Craven was released on a \$25,500 secured bond. Street value of the drugs was approximately \$38,000.00. The investigation is still ongoing and additional arrests are anticipated.