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Green Banner Publications

Initial court hearings were conducted in Scott Circuit Court on Friday morning, May 25, for suspected drug dealers Sherry Sue Neace, 48, and Clarence William Robbins, 37, both of Austin.

Officers with the Sheriff's Department had received numerous tips about suspicious activity occurring at Neace's residence, a duplex apartment located at 1317 U.S. Highway 31 North. After an investigation and surveillance of the residence, Deputy Jeremy Arnold was granted a search warrant for the apartment.

At 1:30 p.m. on Wednesday, May 23, Deputy Arnold, Sheriff Dan McClain, Chief Deputy Don Campbell, Detective Rick Barrett, Deputy Rodney Rudder and Reserve Deputy Bobby Garza and Austin Police Chief Donald Spicer and Lt. Shawn Hurt executed the warrant.

In a news release, Deputy Arnold stated that "...significant amounts of money and prescription medications..." were seized. Opana, Oxycodone hydrochloride, Alprazolam and morphine sulfate were among the substances found, the report related.

Officers also located several pieces of drug paraphernalia and an unused tombstone still in a wooden crate. In checking for the owner of the stone, it was discovered that the stone had been stolen from a Fewell Monument Company warehouse recently.

Neace and Robbins were transported to the Scott County Security Center in Scottsburg and booked on suspicion of dealing in drugs.

They were in court before Judge Roger Duvall on Friday morning. Neace is facing 11 charges, six counts of dealing in a Class 1-3 controlled substance, all Class B felonies; maintaining a common nuisance, receiving stolen property and neglect of a dependent, all Class D felonies; and the more unusual charge of taking a child to a nuisance and a count of possession of paraphernalia, both Class A misdemeanors.

An explanation of that tenth charge, taking a child to a nuisance, indicated that Neace is suspected of having a child with her while she allegedly conducted a drug transaction.

Robbins is charged with one count of conspiracy to deal in a Scheduled 1-3 controlled substance , a count of attempt to deal in a Schedule 1-3 controlled substance and a count of dealing in a Schedule 1-3 controlled substance, all Class B felonies. He too is charged with maintaining a common nuisance and receiving stolen property, Class D felonies, and possession of paraphernalia, a Class A misdemeanor.

Class B felonies have a sentencing range of from six to 20 years. D felonies having a sentencing range of from six months to three years.

Both defendants have bails of $100,000 corporate surety/full cash. Each will receive the services of a public defender to help them with their defenses.

Preliminary jury trial dates were assigned for each defendant by Judge Duvall. Neace's date is October 1. Robbins' date is October 9.