

Felony charges filed this week against seven people for alleged drug activities

Written by Marty Randall

Wednesday, 07 May 2014 00:00 -

Six people had been placed behind bars with a seventh being sought as of Wednesday, April 30, as the result of a drug round-up conducted by the Sheriff's Department.

Those arrested by the department include Kathy Babcock, 39, Austin; Joseph J. "Jay" Barrett, 36, Austin; James Caudill, 57, Austin; Travis Pate, 22, Scottsburg; Ray Lee Stidham, 50, Austin; and Michael White, 50, Austin.

"These individuals were alleged to be dealing in a variety of narcotics, including prescription pills and methamphetamine," stated Sheriff Dan McClain. During the serving of arrest warrants, Sheriff McClain said his officers discovered and seized additional narcotics, drug paraphernalia and equipment known to be used when dealing drugs.

Babcock is charged with dealing in a Schedule 1, 2 or 3 controlled substance, a Class B felony, and maintaining a common nuisance, a Class D felony. Deputy Jeremy Arnold, who prepared all of the probable cause affidavits filed with the cases, said he became aware of possible illegal activity at Babcock's residence on West York Street on April 1. A confidential source enabled the officer to document a purchase of Oxycontin from Babcock on April 15, the document stated.

In the case of Joseph J. Barrett, a "controlled purchase" of methamphetamine from Barrett also occurred on April 15 through the use of a confidential source, related the affidavit. His charges include dealing in methamphetamine, a B felony, and a D felony of maintaining a common nuisance.

At the time of his arrest, Barrett was purportedly in possession of additional methamphetamine, drug paraphernalia and drug dealing equipment, the department's news release advised.

Oxycodone Hydrochloride was allegedly purchased from James Caudill on April 15 at his residence on Broadway Street. In the information received by Deputy Arnold, he related that Caudill purportedly had several people living with him that sell him or give him their prescription drugs in lieu of rent.

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Caudill's charges are a Class B dealing in Schedule 1, 2 or 3 controlled substance and maintaining a common nuisance.

The youngest of those arrested, Travis Pate is charged with two Class A felonies of dealing in a Schedule 1, 2 or 3 controlled substance. His charges are more severe because Pate allegedly sold Oxymorphone, commonly known as "half-moons," within 1,000 feet of Scottsburg Elementary School and within 1,000 feet of a Scottsburg park. These purchases purportedly occurred on March 14 and March 25, the affidavit related.

When Pate was taken into custody, he was also allegedly in possession of "...several bottles of anabolic steroids and a substantial amount of hypodermic needles," the Sheriff's Department release stated.

Alleged controlled purchases of methamphetamine on February 26 and March 4 from Ray Lee Stidham at his residence on South Cypress Street resulted in Stidham's arrest and the filing of two counts of Class B felony dealing in methamphetamine and two counts of Class D felony maintaining a common nuisance.

In the probable cause affidavit filed against Michael White, Deputy Arnold said he directed a controlled buy of Hydrocodone from White at his residence on South Fifth Street on April 1.

All of the six have now had initial court hearings in Scott Circuit Court. On Tuesday, April 29, preliminary pleas of not guilty were entered for Babcock, Caudill, Stidham and White. Similar pleas were entered for Barrett and Pate on Wednesday morning, April 30.

Judge Roger Duvall set initial jury trial dates for all, September 30 for Babcock and White; October 7 for Barrett, Caudill and Stidham; and October 14 for Pate.

All of the defendants' bails were originally set at \$75,000 corporate surety bond or \$15,000 cash bond. Bond reductions to \$75,000 corporate surety or \$5,000 cash was entered in the

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cases of Babcock, Caudill and White. Stidham, who is reported to be in poor health, was allowed release on home confinement. His terms under that agreement allow him to leave his residence only for doctor appointments or court appearances.

Caudill was the only defendant that has been released on cash bond. The other four remained incarcerated as of Monday, May 5.

A public defender has been appointed to handle each case.

During his initial court hearing, Barrett requested mental health assistance while in jail.

As already noted, a seventh person, a woman, is still being sought for alleged dealing in methamphetamine and maintaining a common nuisance.

Sheriff McClain commended Deputy Arnold and other officers for their work on the cases. He also encouraged citizens to report suspicious activity in their neighborhood to the Sheriff's Department. The department's anonymous, 24-hour tip line is 752-7898.