

2020 Nanticoke PD News

12/22/2020

[Nanticoke man facing drug charges after traffic stop](#)

Amanda Christman – Citizens Voice

State police at Hazleton say they found nearly 9 ounces of crystal methamphetamine when they stopped a Nanticoke man driving through Hazle Twp. on Monday morning.

Thomas W. O'Brien, 51, was arrested and charged with manufacture, delivery or possession with intent to manufacture or deliver, driving under the influence of a controlled substance, possession of a controlled substance, use or possession of drug paraphernalia and three summary violations. His bail was set at \$30,000 Monday by Magisterial District Judge James Dixon, Hazle Twp.

According to arrest papers, police stopped the grey Infiniti G35 he was driving east on state Route 424, near Interstate 81 in Hazle Twp. He left his lane of travel and had his turn signal on, though he never turned before they stopped him around midnight, troopers wrote.

O'Brien showed signs of impairment and was taken into custody. His vehicle was searched before being towed away and inside police found 8.81 ounces of crystal methamphetamine and a digital scale, according to court papers.

12/22/2020

[Nanticoke man charged after methamphetamine allegedly found during traffic stop](#)

HAZLE TWP. — A man from Nanticoke was arrested after state police allegedly found crystal methamphetamine inside his vehicle during a traffic stop early Monday morning. State police at Hazleton in court records say they stopped Thomas William O'Brien, 51, of South Walnut Street, operating a 2009 Infiniti, for several traffic violations while traveling on Arthur Gardner Parkway just after midnight.

O'Brien exited the vehicle due to the driver's side window not able to be rolled down, court records say.

A trooper allegedly noticed O'Brien was unsteady on his feet after he exited the vehicle and later noticed O'Brien's eyes were constricted.

After the trooper requested O'Brien to tilt his head back and open his mouth, the trooper allegedly noticed an orange substance on the roof of O'Brien's mouth. O'Brien allegedly told the trooper he consumes narcotics, specifically pain killers, but not regularly.

O'Brien was arrested after field sobriety tests.

During a search of O'Brien's vehicle, the trooper found nearly 250 grams of methamphetamine and a digital scale in the trunk of his vehicle, court records say.

O'Brien was arraigned by District Judge James Dixon in Luzerne County Central Court on charges of possession with intent to deliver a controlled substance, possession of a controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia, driving under the influence of a controlled substance, driving with a suspended license and two traffic violations. He was

jailed at the county correctional facility for lack of \$30,000 bail.

12/10/2020

[Wanted Nanticoke man arrested on drug charges](#)

The U.S. Marshals Fugitive Task Force arrested a man early Wednesday morning who had an arrest warrant out against him stemming from narcotics trafficking charges.

Josh Parsons, 27, of Nanticoke was arrested and charged with multiple drug-related offenses stemming from a narcotics investigation conducted by the Luzerne County District Attorney's Drug Task Force and the Hanover Township Narcotics unit. The charges were initially filed on Sept. 18.

According to a post on the Hanover Township Police Department's Facebook page: Authorities from the Fugitive Task Force took Parsons into custody at his South Hanover Street residence around 7 a.m. on Tuesday morning. Parsons had an arrest warrant issued against him by the Hanover Township Police Department on felony narcotics charges. Parsons was arraigned on Tuesday in front of Magisterial District Judge Joseph Halsey and charged with two counts of possession of a controlled substance with intent to deliver. The suspect also had a Failure to Appear bench warrant out against him in relation to a 2019 Drug Task Force case involving the delivery of crystal meth in Hanover Township. Parsons was lodged at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility for failure to post \$25,000 in bail, and he'll await a preliminary hearing set for Dec. 14.

12/5/2020

[Police: Man drove off with motorized shopping cart from supermarket](#)

Bob Kalinowski – Citizens Voice

A Hanover Twp. man was arrested earlier this week on theft charges for driving away with a Weis Market motorized shopping cart in Nanticoke, according to arrest papers.

Police say they were able to identify Joseph McManus, 27, as the culprit because he used his Weis Shoppers Club Card when buying a bag of donuts at the store prior to fleeing on the cart.

Arrest papers say McManus drove around the store in the motorized cart on Oct. 22 to make his purchase and drove the vehicle away from the store.

After the cart was discovered missing, police said they tried to locate the vehicle, valued at \$1,245, but were unsuccessful.

Investigators said an asset protection officer told them the shopper's card used by the person who stole the cart belonged to McManus. Police said social media and driver's license photos of McManus matched the person who took the cart.

McManus, of Boland Avenue, was charged with theft and unauthorized use of automobiles and other vehicles. He was arraigned Wednesday by Magisterial District Judge Joseph Spagnuolo, who ordered McManus jailed in the Luzerne County Correctional Facility in lieu of \$10,000 percentage bail.

12/2/2020

[Nanticoke police arrest man on burglary, drug possession charges](#)

Ed Lewis

City police arrested Jason Joseph Wojciechowski, 21, on charges he burglarized and ransacked a business and trespassed at another business on Tuesday.

Police allege surveillance cameras inside Reilly Finishing on Alden Road recorded a man forcing open a garage door at 4:35 a.m., and walking around inside stealing copper racks. The man placed the copper racks in a box and left out a door, according to court records. Police identified Wojciechowski as the man in the surveillance footage.

Hours later, police responded to a suspicious person trespassing within a fenced area at Pinnacle Roofing Inc. on Hay Street at about 2:40 p.m.

An employee at the roofing business told an officer the man walked toward the Apollo Circle apartment complex where they encountered Wojciechowski attempting to open a garage door.

When the officer pulled up, Wojciechowski attempted to hide behind a parked vehicle. Police allege Wojciechowski was in possession of numerous types of jewelry, coins, pills, drug packaging wrappers, a prescription bottle in another person's name and small box of Froot Loops cereal.

Wojciechowski told the officer he "Took meth, but I only took a little, little bit," according to court records.

He was treated at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital.

Police charged Wojciechowski with two counts of theft and one count each of burglary, criminal trespass and disorderly conduct for the alleged incident at Reilly Finishing, and with criminal trespass, defiant trespass, disorderly conduct, public drunkenness, possession of a controlled substance, misbranding a controlled substance and possession of drug paraphernalia for the alleged incident at Pinnacle Roofing.

District Judge Matthew C. Christopher arraigned Wojciechowski on Wednesday and jailed him at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility for lack of \$35,000 total bail.

11/16/2020

[Child sexual assault charges dismissed against Nanticoke man](#)

A state appellate court last week dismissed felony sexual assault related charges against a Nanticoke man citing a hearsay testimony rule recently overturned by the state Supreme Court.

The dismissal of seven child sex assault charges against Jayson S. Montanez, 34, doesn't mean he will be released from prison.

Montanez, who resided in the 200 block of West Church Street when he was arrested in November 2014, is serving a state prison sentence of 18 months to three years imposed in March 2019 by Luzerne County President Judge Michael T. Vough after he admitted to possessing child pornography on his cell phone, according to court records.

Montanez is listed as a sexual offender on the state police Megan's Law website and will be required to register his address for 15 years when released from prison.

Nanticoke police charged Montanez in November 2014 with two counts each of involuntary

deviate sexual intercourse, aggravated indecent assault, indecent assault and a single count of corruption of minors alleging he abused a girl hundreds of times between 2012 and July 2014.

Those charges were forwarded to county court following a preliminary hearing held Jan. 12, 2015, where prosecutors presented one witness, a caseworker from Luzerne County Children and Youth Services.

Montanez appealed the child sex assault case claiming prosecutors relied on hearsay evidence at the preliminary hearing.

At the time of Montanez' appeal in 2016, which was denied, judges followed a Superior Court's 2015 ruling that was known as the "Ricker Rule," which allowed hearsay testimony to establish cases at the preliminary hearing level.

In July 2020, the state Supreme Court overturned the Ricker Rule giving the opinion that hearsay evidence is admissible so long as it is not the only evidence presented at the preliminary hearing.

The state's highest appellate court permitted Montanez's appeal to go forward and advised the state Superior Court to review his appeal.

"As a result of this change in the law, on Sept. 9, 2020, the Supreme Court granted (Montanez) petition for allowance of appeal and remand this case for our consideration," the Superior Court ruled Nov. 10.

The Superior Court opined, "It is undisputed that (prosecutors) presented only hearsay evidence at (Montanez) preliminary hearing. (Prosecutors) failed to sustain its burden to establish all elements of all of the crimes charges for purposes of establishing prima facie case at the preliminary hearing. We, therefore, reverse the trial court's order....and dismiss the charges against him."

Prosecutors have the option to refile the child sexual assault charges against Montanez.

11/14/2020

[Unruly casino guest arrested on drug charges](#)

James Halpin – Citizens Voice

A Nanticoke man wanted for violating a protection-from-abuse order was arrested at Mohegan Sun Pocono early Friday after becoming aggressive with security officers while high on drugs, according to Plains Twp. police.

Police say William Lee Lewis, 38, was arrested around 1:30 a.m. after becoming disorderly and aggressive with officers.

Lewis was acting erratically and police say they determined he was under the influence of a controlled substance.

After determining Lewis was wanted on a warrant for violating a PFA order, police searched Lewis and found him in possession of crystal methamphetamine, according to police.

Lewis was charged with drug possession, possession of drug paraphernalia, disorderly conduct and public intoxication.

He was released on \$10,000 unsecured bail with a preliminary hearing scheduled for Nov. 25.

11/10/2020

Nanticoke pair charged with dealing fentanyl

James Halpin – Citizens Voice

Two Nanticoke residents are facing drug-trafficking charges after a search of their home turned up hundreds of packets of fentanyl Monday morning, according to police.

Tedd O. Eldridge, 43, and Stephanie Danko, 31, were arrested when Hanover Twp. and Nanticoke police descended on their home on Lincoln Avenue around 7:10 a.m. Monday. A search turned up more than \$12,000 in cash, 887 packets of fentanyl stamped “New Law,” a stolen gun, marijuana, cellphones and digital scales, police said.

They were both charged with drug trafficking and drug possession. Eldridge was also charged with receiving stolen property, possessing drug paraphernalia and illegally possessing a firearm.

Magisterial District Judge Donald L. Whittaker arraigned the pair Monday morning and set bail at \$250,000 each. They were being held at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility with a preliminary hearing set for Nov. 25.

11/1/2020

2 arrested, drugs and cash seized after alleged drug deal

Steve Mocarsky – Citizens Voice

HANOVER TWP. — Law enforcement officers arrested two people after an alleged drug deal Saturday and seized crack cocaine, marijuana and thousands of dollars during a subsequent search.

Jeffrey Hawthorne, 35, of West Green Street, Nanticoke, and Nicole Tonte, 42, of Dana Street, Forty Fort, face drug charges as a result of a joint narcotics operation conducted by the Pennsylvania Office of Attorney General’s Bureau of Narcotic Investigations (Region 8), the Luzerne County Drug Task Force and the Hanover Township Police Department Narcotics Unit.

Police say Hawthorne was contacted Friday to deliver an ounce of crack cocaine to a parking lot off the Sans Souci Parkway in Hanover Twp. He and Tonte were taken into custody after the delivery of crack cocaine was made.

Narcotics agents and officers served a search warrant at Hawthorne’s residence and Hanover Township’s narcotics K-9 Rok led officers to the seizure of crack cocaine, marijuana and over \$6,000 in U.S. currency. In total, over \$9000 was seized during the operations conducted Friday, township police said.

Police also discovered that Hawthorne had an outstanding felony arrest warrant from the Nanticoke City Police Department for delivery of crack cocaine and also is on New York State parole.

Police said Hawthorne and Tonye both were charged with criminal conspiracy to deliver crack cocaine and that Hawthorne also was charged with delivery of a Schedule II controlled substance, crack cocaine; possession with the intent to deliver crack cocaine; and possession of crack cocaine.

They were arraigned before Magisterial District Judge Joseph Carmody, and who set Hawthorne’s bail at \$50,000 straight cash on the new charges and \$25,000 straight cash on the Nanticoke arrest warrant. Hawthorne was jailed at the Luzerne County Correctional

Facility and Tonte was released on \$10,000 unsecured bail.
Their preliminary hearings are set for 8:30 a.m. Nov. 18 before Carmody.

10/28/2020

[Capital murder case delayed amid COVID-19 concerns](#)

James Halpin – Citizens Voice

The long-delayed capital murder trial of Anthony Spudis was put off another eight months on Tuesday, with his defense citing difficulties preparing for trial amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

Spudis, 38, is charged with robbing and murdering 97-year-old Gertrude Price, whose family found her body in her bed at 23 E. Grand St. in Nanticoke on Nov. 29, 2013.

Prosecutors allege Spudis brutally beat and stabbed the elderly woman with a screwdriver during a Thanksgiving night break-in.

During a hearing Tuesday before Luzerne County Judge Tina Polachek Gartley, Assistant District Attorney Daniel Zola said prosecutors were ready for Spudis' Jan. 6 trial date.

But defense attorney Robert Saurman requested more time due to "various reasons, most of which are COVID-related." He said a capital murder case requires more in-depth preparations than a standard criminal trial.

"Death is different," he said.

For example, he said his private detective has fallen behind on preparations, while his mitigation expert has not been able to see people face-to-face, which is ideal, he said.

Saurman also said access to Spudis has been limited on occasion. Spudis is being held at the Lackawanna County Prison, which is currently on lockdown due to a case of COVID-19.

Gartley said trials have resumed in Luzerne County with the use of larger-scale facilities such as the Mohegan Sun Arena at Casey Plaza. She questioned whether delaying the case until the summer would have any meaningful effect.

"I believe I can find the time to do it," Saurman said, referring to meeting with Spudis to review evidence. "I don't think it's a never."

Gartley granted the motion to continue and pushed the month-long trial back until Aug. 16.

Spudis continues to be held without bail.

10/28/2020

[Another continuance in Spudis homicide trial](#)

Patrick Kernan – Times Leader

Once again, the trial of Anthony Spudis has been pushed back significantly. This time, it's mostly because of COVID-19, his defense attorney says.

Spudis, 38, is facing an open count of criminal homicide, accused of breaking into the the home of Nanticoke woman Gertrude Price on Thanksgiving in 2013. According to police, Spudis stabbed Price, 97, several times in the head in an altercation that police say originally began as a burglary.

Spudis has been locked up since his December 2017 arrest, with his trial having been delayed multiple times since then. Prosecutors are seeking the death penalty in the case against him.

And while Assistant District Attorney Daniel Zola that the prosecution team would be ready for the planned trial date of early January. But defense attorney Robert Saurman said the defense team won't be.

According to Saurman, at the Tuesday hearing before Luzerne County Judge Tina Polachek Gartley, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused major scheduling issues, which is especially difficult due to the extra effort involved in a death penalty case.

Saurman said that the defense team's detective and mitigation experts are far behind on schedule, as both have been unable to meet with interview subjects for in-person meetings. He also said that it is difficult to meet with Spudis, who is currently being housed at the Lackawanna County Correctional Facility. While Saurman said that the facility has been as accommodating as possible, it has still been difficult, as the prison has had to go into lock-down a handful of times since the beginning of the pandemic, adding that the prison is actively under a lock-down at this moment.

As such, Saurman asked for more time to be able to prepare. Gartley also noted that she had concerns about Saurman's ability to visit with his client, agreeing that a continuance was necessary under the circumstances.

Gartley set Spudis' trial to begin on Aug. 16, 2021, with a full two weeks planned for jury selection, as the capital-status of the case causes increased complications for the jury selection process. The trial itself is expected to continue for another two weeks.

Spudis was arrested in late December 2017, after two inmates at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility reported he talked about killing a woman in Nanticoke on Thanksgiving a few years previously.

Prosecutors say police found items at the home of Spudis' former girlfriend, Taryn Simms, that implicate him, including a screwdriver that is believed to have been the weapon used to kill Price. Other items from Price's home also were found hidden in the rafters of Simms' home, prosecutors say.

10/22/2020

[Nearly 1,600 heroin/fentanyl packets found during search of Nanticoke apartment](#)

Luzerne County detectives allegedly found 1,580 heroin/fentanyl packets and approximately 24 grams of crystal methamphetamine inside a safe when they searched an apartment on Front Street on Tuesday.

Brenyn Tyler Laury, 25, was arrested and charged with two felony counts of possession with intent to deliver a controlled substance after the illegal drugs were found inside his apartment, according to court records.

According to the criminal complaint:

Detectives received information that a man known as "Little B" was selling heroin and fentanyl in the Wilkes-Barre Area. The alias was identified as Laury.

A search warrant was served at Laury's apartment where detectives found the heroin and fentanyl packets and methamphetamine inside a safe kept in a bedroom, the complaint says.

Laury allegedly admitted he uses heroin and fentanyl and sells the illegal drug.

Laury was arraigned Wednesday by District Judge Thomas Malloy in Wilkes-Barre and

jailed at the county correctional facility for lack of \$50,000 bail.

10/14/2020

Police: Despite fearing “predator catcher” sting, man arranged to meet boy for sex
Bob Kalinowski – Citizens Voice

Kingston police say they’ve arrested a Nanticoke man for arranging to meet a 15-year-old boy for sex despite admitting he feared the person really was the “predator catcher” from Facebook.

Police said they arrested Kenneth C. Schmidt, 41, of 150 S. Hanover St., Nanticoke, at a prearranged location where he agreed to meet the boy, who really was an undercover detective posing as the boy.

Schmidt was charged with multiple counts of unlawful contact with a minor and one count of criminal use of a communications device. He was arraigned by Magisterial District Judge David Barilla, who ordered Schmidt jailed in the Luzerne County Correctional Facility in lieu of \$50,000 bail.

Investigators say Schmidt repeatedly for days acknowledged it would be wrong for him to meet the boy and feared he was being set up in a sting operation.

“I already think you are the guy from Facebook, the predator catcher,” Schmidt wrote Monday night, according to arrest papers.

However, Schmidt continued the conversation, tried to convince the boy to go for a ride with him, and then made arrangements to meet on Tuesday, police said.

Police say the conversation turned sexual Tuesday morning and Schmidt told the boy about his preferences. “No more games,” Schmidt warned, police said.

Officers say they took Schmidt into custody when he arrived to meet the boy at a location they agreed upon.

During questioning, Schmidt admitted he had planned to meet a 15-year-old boy for sex, police said.

10/8/2020

Five men facing federal charges of fentanyl trafficking resulting in death

A Ford F150 pickup truck was seized during a raid by the Luzerne County Drug Task Force and the U.S. Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives at YIYO Auto Electric & Repair Inc. on Hazle Street, Wilkes-Barre, on Feb. 5, 2020. Jerry Lynott | Times Leader

SCRANTON — Three brothers and two other men busted earlier this year in a large scale illegal drug trafficking ring were charged by federal authorities with fentanyl peddling that resulted in a death, announced the U.S. Attorney’s Office on Tuesday.

Edwin Tejeda, 30, Jose Raymer Tejeda, 36, and Emilio Tejeda, 32, were indicted by a federal grand jury June 30 with conspiring to distribute cocaine and 400 grams or more of fentanyl between January 2016 and February.

According to U.S. Attorney David J. Freed, the indictment unsealed Monday alleges Edwin Tejeda and Jose Tejeda caused the death of a person by supplying fentanyl.

The three brothers are charged with 19 counts of trafficking fentanyl and tramadol during

the conspiracy and maintaining a drug premises.

Federal and local drug agents on Feb. 5 executed search warrants at three properties in Wilkes-Barre and a residence in Edwardsville.

Court records say Edwin Tejada and Jose Tejada brought in large amounts of fentanyl to a service garage, YIYO Auto Electric & Repair, at 513 Hazle St., Wilkes-Barre. Three vehicles with hidden hydraulic compartments were seized from the garage when it was searched.

Agents alleged in court records fentanyl was delivered to 397 Blackman St., Wilkes-Barre, where James Robert Garris Jr., 51, sold it to customers.

Garris and James Tindol Jr., 37, of Nanticoke, were charged by federal authorities with delivering fentanyl that resulted in a death, according to Freed.

Garris pleaded guilty to the charge and is awaiting sentencing in federal court. Tindol's federal case remains open.

In a related case, Kearon Brinson, 40, of West Nanticoke, and Lamont Hubbard, 49, of Plymouth, were indicted by a federal grand jury on drug trafficking and ammunition charges.

Authorities alleged Brinson would obtain fentanyl from Edwin Tejada and Jose Tejada and in return, Brinson supplied the drug to Hubbard whose task was to package and distribute to a network of street dealers. Hubbard also collected cash and turn the proceeds over to Brinson, authorities alleged.

Freed said the indictment against the three brothers seeks forfeiture of two Wilkes-Barre properties, two firearms and ammunition, and more than \$25,000 seized by authorities.

The indictments remained sealed until Edwin Tejada was apprehended while traveling to the United States from the Dominican Republic.

The case was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, Luzerne County Drug Task Force and Kingston police.

10/2/2020

Drug bust in Hanover Twp

Officers seized fentanyl packets, MDMA (Ecstasy) tablets, marijuana and \$33,800 in cash at a Nanticoke home on Thursday, police said.

Erick Mark – Citizens Voice

A Nanticoke man faces drug trafficking charges after police raided his home Thursday morning, according to police.

Hanover Twp. and Nanticoke police along with the Luzerne County Drug Task Force served a search warrant at the East Noble Street residence of Robert R. Dawson, 29, at 7 a.m. Thursday, police said in a news release.

Officers seized fentanyl packets, MDMA (Ecstasy) tablets, marijuana and \$33,800 in cash, police said.

Within the cash was prerecorded buy money that was used to purchase heroin and fentanyl in an undercover narcotics operation, according to police.

Police charged Dawson with two felony counts of possession with intent to deliver a controlled substance, and two misdemeanor counts of possession of a controlled substance. He was arraigned before Magisterial District Judge Donald Whittaker and sent to Luzerne

County Correctional Facility in lieu of \$500,000 bail. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for Oct. 14.

9/22/2020

[Delaware County man busted in online sex sting in Nanticoke](#)
[Court records say Charles Isiah-Cordell Solomon requested to keep underwear](#)

A man from Delaware County believing he was meeting a 13-year-old girl for sex requested to keep the girl's underwear, according to court records.

Charles Isiah-Cordell Solomon, 22, of Upper Darby, was arrested early Saturday morning when he showed up at a park in Nanticoke to meet the teen girl who was an undercover state agent with the state Office of Attorney General.

Solomon messaged the girl on social media Friday night asking if she was a virgin, what sex acts she enjoyed, and to wear certain clothing without a bra, court records say.

Solomon allegedly told the girl to wear a certain type of underwear because he wanted to keep it for later enjoyment and to bring a second pair of underwear. Solomon also asked the girl if he could video record the intended sex act, according to court records.

Solomon was arraigned by District Judge Ferris Webby in Wright Township on charges of unlawful contact with a minor, sexual abuse, statutory sexual abuse and criminal use of communication facility. He was jailed at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility for lack of \$175,000 bail.

According to the criminal complaint:

A state agent posing as a 13-year-old girl on a social media app received a message from "Chris" at 7:57 p.m. Friday.

"Chris," who was later identified as Solomon, was told he was messaging a 13-year-old girl. Solomon asked for a picture of the girl and solicited sex, the complaint says.

The criminal complaint says Solomon arrived at the park in Nanticoke at about 1:25 a.m. Saturday, looked around and sent a message to the girl saying he was waiting.

After he was arrested, Solomon during an interview with authorities admitted he solicited a minor for sex.

Solomon claimed during his interview that he likes the idea of being the first sexual encounter for virgins because they are free of sexual transmitted diseases, and said he has met approximately 10 females online for sex acts, the complaint says.

9/2/2020

[Nanticoke man charged with sharing child porn](#)
James Halpin - Citizens Voice

A Nanticoke man was charged Wednesday with sharing child pornography on Facebook. Randall Scott Fischer, 49, was arrested after police raided his home at 127 E. Green St. on Wednesday morning.

According to the complaint, Luzerne County detectives and West Hazleton police began investigating after receiving a tip from Facebook via the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children.

Facebook reported Fischer's account had uploaded an image of a pre-pubescent girl who

was nude below the waist, according to police.

During questioning Wednesday, Fischer admitted receiving the image and to sending it along to others, the complaint said.

Fischer denied meeting or knowing the people he sent the image to, police said.

9/2/2020

Nanticoke man charged with sharing child pornography

Ed Lewis

A Nanticoke man was arrested on allegations he downloaded and shared child pornography on a social media site.

Randall Scott Fischer, 49, of East Green Street, allegedly received images of child pornography from an unknown person and shared the images to others on Facebook Messenger.

Fischer was arraigned by District Judge Donald Whittaker in Nanticoke on 11 counts of dissemination of children engaged in sex acts and two counts of criminal use of communication facility. He was jailed at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility for lack of \$250,000 bail.

According to the criminal complaint:

Luzerne County detectives and West Hazleton police, members of the Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force and state police Northeast Computer Crime Unit, executed a search warrant at Fischer's residence Wednesday morning.

The search warrant was the result of Cybertips they received about suspected child pornography traced to Fischer's residence.

Fischer admitted to creating two Facebook Messenger accounts and receiving inappropriate images of children from an unknown person. Fischer then sent the images to other people, the complaint says.

Fischer told detectives, "I'm not doing it anymore," according to the complaint.

8/20/2020

Police: Fleeing suspect swam across river to avoid arrest

A man from Nanticoke attempted to elude capture by police in Plymouth by swimming across the Susquehanna River, according to court records.

Thomas Painter, 25, of Coal Street, swam across the river to avoid arrest by Plymouth police who were chasing him after a hit and run crash on West Main Street near Washington Avenue at about 4:30 p.m. Tuesday.

Police allege Painter, operating a motorcycle, took off after colliding with a vehicle.

Painter abandoned the motorcycle behind a residence on Moss Street and ran into an apartment, police said in court records.

Police in court records say Painter was later spotted walking on Moss Street where he initiated a foot chase.

Painter allegedly ran through a yard on Beade Street toward the levee.

Police allege Painter failed to obey officers' commands to stop and jumped in the river.

An officer noticed Painter in the middle of the river swimming across to Hanover

Township where officers arrested him, court records say. Police said Painter's driver's license was suspended. He was allegedly found in possession of eight wet heroin packets in his pocket. Painter was arraigned by District Judge Joseph Halsey in Hanover Township on charges of resisting arrest, accidents involving damage to attended vehicle, possession of a controlled substance, possession of drug paraphernalia, driving with a suspended license and three traffic citations. He was jailed at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility for lack of \$50,000 bail.

7/9/2020

[Student donates shields to Nanticoke police officers...Read more.](#)

Citizens Voice - Editor's Pick

6/19/2020

[Nanticoke man gets prison time in fatal DUI wreck](#)

A Nanticoke man who caused a deadly crash while driving under the influence was sentenced Thursday to serve at least three years in state prison. Jose Mariano Crespo Mendez, 22, previously pleaded guilty to charges of vehicular homicide, reckless endangerment, fleeing police and driving under the influence of cocaine and marijuana.

Luzerne County Judge Richard M. Hughes III imposed the sentence Thursday, ordering Crespo Mendez to serve 40 to 80 months in prison followed by 2½ years of probation. Crespo Mendez was given credit for 222 days time served.

According to prosecutors, Crespo Mendez killed Gerald Mosley, 72, while fleeing police trying to pull him over for traffic violations on May 24, 2019.

According to police, the high-speed chase began on Interstate 81 north near Exit 165 in Ashley and continued until the crash on East Main Street in Wilkes-Barre. Mosley died at Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center on June 1, 2019.

Court records show that a few months after the deadly crash, Wilkes-Barre city police cited Crespo Mendez for driving without a license and using a counterfeit inspection certificate on Oct. 28, 2019.

Those cases remain inactive, with the summonses returned unclaimed, according to court records.

As part of his sentence in the vehicular homicide case, Crespo Mendez was ordered to pay \$10,249 in restitution.

Hughes also ordered Crespo Mendez to obtain his general education development diploma and to undergo drug and alcohol evaluations.

Assistant District Attorney Jill Sosnoski prosecuted the case.

6/17/2020

[S.C. sex offender faces charges for failing to register address](#)

James Halpin - Citizens Voice

Nanticoke police have charged a South Carolina sex offender with failing to properly register his address.

Joseph Charles Tice, 55, was charged Tuesday with six felony counts alleging he failed to comply with sex offender registry requirements and one summary count of public drunkenness.

According to the South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, Tice — whose registered address is in Philadelphia — was convicted in August 2011 of criminal sexual contact with a minor and contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Nanticoke police arrested Tice Monday and Magisterial District Judge Ferris Peter Webby Sr. arraigned him Tuesday morning.

Tice was being held at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility with bail set at \$100,000.

4/28/2020

Police: Fired employee used propane torch to set fire behind former Nanticoke State Hospital

City police allege a man used a propane torch to set fire in a garage behind the former Nanticoke State Hospital earlier this month.

Surveillance cameras allegedly recorded Matthew John Myslowski, 26, address listed as homeless, holding a propane torch behind the former hospital at 4 a.m. on April 18, about 40 minutes before firefighters responded to the blaze, according to court records.

The property owner told police he terminated Myslowski about three weeks earlier.

Myslowski, who has been jailed on an unrelated burglary case filed by Nanticoke police last week, was arraigned by District Judge Donald Whittaker in Nanticoke on charges of arson, possession of an explosive device, burglary, criminal trespass, theft and criminal mischief. He remained jailed at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility for lack of \$100,000 bail on the arson related case.

The former state hospital on West Washington Street was previously Mercy Special Care, Northeast Counseling and Pro Care Health.

According to the criminal complaint:

Firefighters responded to the fire in a garage behind the former hospital at 4:55 a.m. on April 18. The garage had no electrical service.

An investigation by state police deputy fire marshal Trooper Brian Atherholt ruled the cause of the fire arson.

Robert Rasul, owner of the property, told police surveillance cameras recorded Myslowski and another person on the property at 4:01 a.m. Rasul told police Myslowski was fired about three weeks earlier and was told to stay away from the property, the complaint says. Police in the complaint noted a surveillance camera recorded Myslowski holding a propane torch and the other person holding what appeared to be a chainsaw while they walked away from the garage.

Myslowski was allegedly recorded with a flashlight in his mouth and holding the propane torch when he climbs onto a patio and enters the former Northeast Counseling building on the property.

Rasul reported propane canisters, a hose torch, a weed trimmer, a lap top computer, a chainsaw and two tank heater heads were stolen from the former Northeast Counseling

building, the complaint says.

Wires to two surveillance cameras were cut, police said.

When Myslowski was arrested on the unrelated burglary case, police questioned him about the fire.

Myslowski claimed he was upset because he felt he was being scammed by his former employer and had permission to use a room inside the former Northeast Counseling building. He initially blamed the fire on another person but later admitted he did set a “normal fire” in the garage using the propane torch, the complaint says.

4/16/2020

Chase suspect crashes into parked boat

Bob Kalinowski – Citizens Voice

In a police chase that began Wednesday morning in Nanticoke and exceeded 100 mph at points, a fleeing suspect drove the wrong way down state Route 29 in Hanover Twp., made an abrupt U-turn on state Route 11 near Shickshinny, and eventually crashed into a parked boat in Plymouth Twp.

Victor Manuel Correa, 40, of Rear 223 W. Union St., Nanticoke, was taken into custody after crashing into the boat trailer near the Plymouth Twp. Municipal Building, according to charges filed by Nanticoke police.

Around 11 a.m., a Nanticoke police officer tried to pull Correa over after witnessing him ignore a stop sign and travel through an intersection at East Green and South Walnut streets, police said.

Police said Correa fled the city on East Main Street, passing cars in the opposite lane, and took the wrong ramp to enter state Route 29, traveling in the wrong direction and dodging oncoming cars. He eventually got on state Route 11, traveling toward Shickshinny at speeds over 100 mph, police said.

But, he stopped and turned around abruptly when he saw state police approaching, police said. By that point, nearly 20 police cars were involved in the chase, police said. Correa continued the other way on state Route 11 until he crashed in Plymouth Twp., police said. Correa was treated for minor injuries at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital and arraigned by Magisterial District Judge Donald Whittaker in Nanticoke, police said. He was charged with fleeing police, recklessly endangering another person, reckless driving and various traffic violations. He was lodged at Luzerne County Correctional Facility in lieu of \$100,000 bail. A preliminary hearing will be held April 29, police said.

Nanticoke police were assisted by state police and officers from the Plymouth, Larksville and Kingston police departments.

4/14/2020

Police: Multiple shots fired in home invasion

WILKES-BARRE — A Nanticoke man who suffered a gunshot wound to his leg during a home invasion on Church Street Saturday night asked to buy a bottle of liquor before the shooting, according to court records.

City police said Jeremy Battle, 30, of South Market Street, was nearly shot two more times

as he fled through the rear yard and climbed over a fence six feet high while being chased by the homeowner.

Battle was found by police at Wilkes-Barre General Hospital where he was being treated for the gunshot injury.

According to the criminal complaint obtained Monday:

Police responded to the Church Street home just before 10 p.m. for gunfire.

Those inside the home told police a man, identified as Battle, not known to them entered the rear kitchen door and asked to buy a bottle of liquor. One person inside the home was cooking in the kitchen when Battle entered the residence.

When those inside the kitchen told Battle to get out, he pulled a pistol from his waistband and aimed it at a person in the kitchen.

Another person inside the house grabbed Battle's arm to disarm him that initiated a struggle.

Police said a person inside the house fired a round from a .45-caliber pistol striking Battle in the leg.

Battle fled the home and ran through the rear yard and climbed over the fence. Two shots were fired at Battle as he fled the property.

Police said Battle was given a ride to General Hospital by Mariena Uravage.

Urage told police she had only known Battle for two days and were having intimate relations for extended periods of time. She claimed Battle instructed her to drive to the area of Church Street where he exited her vehicle, the complaint says.

Urage did not know why Battle needed a ride to Church Street but when he returned to her vehicle, Battle allegedly told her he had been shot and to drive him to a hospital.

Battle gave several versions of what happened, including he was "set up" by a woman who told him where he can buy a bottle of liquor, the complaint says.

Battle was charged with aggravated assault, simple assault, reckless endangerment, criminal trespass and illegal possession of a firearm. He was arraigned by District Judge Thomas F. Malloy Sr. in Wilkes-Barre and jailed at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility for lack of \$150,000 bail.

3/31/2020

[Newport Twp. police chase suspect charged in 2018 carjacking](#)

Bob Kalinowski - Citizens Voice

The man accused of leading police on a wild pursuit through a Newport Twp. cemetery, toppling tombstones and plowing through a fence, has a history of erratic behavior and once was arrested for a carjacking outside the Wyoming Valley Mall in Wilkes-Barre. A criminal complaint filed by Nanticoke City police identified the suspect, as Angelo Brito, 29, of 222 College St. in Nanticoke. Police charged Brito with recklessly endangering another person, simple assault, intentional desecration of a public monument, disorderly conduct and other offenses.

Following a mental health evaluation at a local hospital, Brito was arraigned Monday by Magisterial District Judge Donald Whittaker, who ordered Brito jailed in the Luzerne County Correctional Facility in lieu of \$50,000 bail.

Police said Brito led officers on a chase Sunday getting a report of someone throwing furniture from the second floor of his apartment in Nanticoke. The chase eventually veered into Holy Trinity Cemetery in Newport Twp. After destroying various gravemarkers, police said Brito plowed through a metal fence, badly damaging his car. He was arrested a short time later.

Police previously arrested Brito in January 2018 for a carjacking outside the Wyoming Valley Mall after he ripped a teenage boy from a car and sped off. Brito pleaded guilty to a reduced charge of unauthorized use of a vehicle. He served six months probation.

3/30/2020

[Nanticoke man charged with fleeing police, vandalizing cemetery monuments](#)

A man sentenced last year for stealing a vehicle at the Wyoming Valley Mall in 2018 was charged by city police with initiating a pursuit and crashing into several monuments at a cemetery on Sunday.

Angelo Brito, 30, address listed as Nanticoke, allegedly initiated a pursuit that involved him crashing into a cemetery in Newport Township toppling several tombstones.

Cell phone video of the pursuit posted on social media showed Brito was taken into custody on Alden Road in Newport Township.

Police Chief Michael Roke could not be immediately reached Monday morning.

Court documents say Brito was charged with accidents involving damage to unattended vehicle, accidents involving damage to attended vehicle, fleeing or attempting to elude police, criminal mischief, intentional desecration of public monuments, institutional vandalism of a cemetery, recklessly endangering another person, simple assault and three traffic violations.

More than two years ago, Wilkes-Barre Township police charged Brito with carjacking a 2015 Audi Q7 occupied by a teenage boy from the parking lot at the Wyoming Valley Mall on Jan. 1, 2018.

Court records say Brito pulled the teen from the Audi, jumped in the driver's seat and drove away, side swiping a vehicle on Kidder Street in Wilkes-Barre.

State police located the Audi parked in front of a drive way on West Venisa Drive in Hazle Township.

Brito's criminal case was delayed several times as he was diagnosed with schizoaffective disorder and a history of mental illness.

Brito pleaded guilty to unauthorized use of a vehicle and was sentenced July 23, 2019, by Luzerne County Judge David W. Lupas to six months probation.

Two counts of robbery and one count each of aggravated assault, theft, accidents involving damage to attended vehicle, reckless endangerment, simple assault, disorderly conduct and harassment were withdrawn against Brito in regards to the carjacking on Jan. 1, 2018.

3/21/2020

[Police: Former fire company treasurer stole more than \\$55K](#)

The former treasurer of the Honey Pot Volunteer Hose Company was arraigned Friday on felony theft charges alleging he stole more than \$55,000 from the department.

Daniel E. Wozniak, 46, of 60 Minden Court, is accused of draining the department's accounts so that he could fund a casino gambling habit.

According to the charges, the Honey Pot Club was licensed to serve drinks and provide small games of chance for fundraising before it lost its liquor and gaming licenses for failing to pay its bills.

When club leaders looked into the finances, they discovered more than \$50,000 was missing from its Citizens Bank account and its checking account had a negative balance, police said. Members immediately focused on Wozniak, who was the only member with access to the accounts.

The day after the theft was reported in February 2019, Wozniak's wife Jennifer Wozniak — who was also the club's secretary — came to police headquarters to report him missing. Wozniak had told his wife he was running late at work the night before, but then never came home, police said.

He also sent his wife an email saying he had stolen money from the club to pay some bills and to gamble, police said. Wozniak went on to say that he continued gambling in casinos to recoup the money he lost, according to the complaint.

After police relayed a message through his wife, Wozniak turned himself in to police on Feb. 7, 2019, and confessed, police said.

Wozniak told police he had been skimming cash from the bar revenue as well as from bingo proceeds until the checking account was drained, the complaint says. He then began transferring money from the savings account to cover the bills until that too was drained, police said.

Wozniak admitted he continued stealing and simply stopped paying the utility bills, falsifying records so the books showed money in the bank, police said.

Wozniak, who had not been working regularly since he quit his job in August 2018, led his family to believe he was continuing to work every day, according to the complaint.

Wozniak was instead gambling at Mohegan Sun Pocono or in Philadelphia, police said. To cover up his lack of income, Wozniak told his wife his employer and then the IRS had been withholding his paychecks, police said.

Police charged Wozniak with counts of theft, receiving stolen property and failing to comply with the Charities and Welfare act.

Magisterial District Judge Donald L. Whittaker arraigned Wozniak Friday and set his bail at \$100,000.

Wozniak was being held at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility with a preliminary hearing date set for April 1.

3/11/2020

[Man nearly shoots Nanticoke officers during suicide attempt](#)

A 72-year-old man trying to shoot himself nearly struck two Nanticoke police officers in the face with a shotgun blast during an alcohol-fueled struggle Tuesday morning, according to police.

Police said Russell Clarence Hadley nearly shot Chief Michael Roke and Officer Richard

Vietz as they struggled to disarm him on the balcony of his apartment at 100 Nanticoke Ave.

Officers were dispatched to the unit around 7:50 a.m. to a report of shots fired. A neighbor of Hadley's reported hearing two gunshots before Hadley came knocking at her door holding a glass of wine, according to the complaint.

Hadley, who was drunk, admitted firing the gun before returning to his own apartment, police said.

Officers found Hadley on the balcony, holding a black 12 gauge shotgun with the barrel in his mouth and a finger on the trigger, according to the complaint.

Sgt. Brian Williams was able to convince Hadley to take the barrel out of his mouth, but he would not put down the gun, police said.

Hadley told police he wanted to talk to an ex-girlfriend who was now dating someone else and said he would shoot himself if he could not speak to her, according to the complaint.

Hadley then told police he wanted to smoke a cigarette, and Williams got him one, police said. As Hadley walked toward Williams to get the cigarette, Roke and Vietz rushed him and began struggling for the shotgun, according to the complaint.

During the struggle, Hadley was able to get his finger on the trigger and fired a shot intended for himself, police said.

The gunshot narrowly missed hitting Roke and Vietz in the face, and Williams was then able to jump over a railing to rip the gun out of Hadley's hands, police said.

Police charged Hadley with firing a gun into an occupied structure and reckless endangerment. Magisterial District Judge Donald L. Whittaker arraigned Hadley on the charges Tuesday afternoon and set bail at \$75,000.

Hadley was being held at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility with a preliminary hearing set for March 18.

3/4/2020

Youth teams with nonprofit to raise funds for Nanticoke Police shields

Kevin Carroll

A local elementary school student has teamed up with a nonprofit relief organization to bring pop shields into the Nanticoke Police Department.

Abigail Lovallo, 10, has made it her mission to get a pop shield, deployable shields designed to protect police officers from gunfire inside and outside of their vehicles, into every squad car in Nanticoke, and with the help of the Fallen First Responders Association, she just might do it.

"Her father is a volunteer firefighter," said Abigail's mother, Melinda Remley. "She just wants to help out any way she can."

This all started, according to Remley, when her daughter found about the upcoming Skate With a Cop event set for March 15 at the Skateaway in Wilkes-Barre.

"We saw Skate With a Cop on Facebook, and my daughter wanted to get involved and get some shields for the police department," Remley said.

It started as a simple project, as Abigail and her mother went around to local businesses asking for donations in order to get the pop shields.

Enter the Fallen First Responders Association.

A nonprofit founded just last year, the association aims to aid the families of fallen first

responders financially.

Lovallo linked up with them after they pledged a donation in order to purchase a shield.

"They donated for a shield, and then asked if we could partner up," Remley said.

According to the FFRA Facebook page, the goal is to raise \$2,500 in the month of March, in the hopes of purchasing a pop shield for all six patrol cars that serve the Nanticoke City Police Department.

According to Remley, it's been a slow start, but they "still have a ton of fliers out around town" and have yet to hear back from numerous local businesses.

"We have to get every officer a shield; this is so important," Remley said.

The easiest way to donate to the cause is directly through the FFRA Facebook page, or on the organization's website. T-shirts are also available for purchase on the Facebook page for \$10, with all proceeds going toward the pop shields.

2/29/2020

[Heroin, meth found inside Nanticoke apartment](#)

A convicted drug dealer and a woman were arraigned Friday after city police allegedly found a large amount of heroin, methamphetamine, packaging materials and a shotgun inside their apartment.

Patrick Dougherty Evans, 40, and Mackenzie Lin Ruckman, 24, were arrested after police served a search warrant at their second floor apartment in the 200 block of East Ridge Street.

During the search, packaged bags of methamphetamine and paraphernalia were found inside a bathroom, and large amounts of packaged methamphetamine and heroin, paraphernalia, prescription medication, a shotgun and shotgun shells were found in Evans' bedroom, according to the criminal complaints.

A digital scale and empty packets used to package narcotics were found in the kitchen, the complaints say.

Evans allegedly told police he was given the shotgun from a person who owed him money. Police said Evans is a convicted felon and prohibited from owning, possessing or carrying a firearm.

Court records say Evans has a history of drug trafficking and possession convictions dating back to 1999.

Evans and Ruckman were arraigned by District Judge Donald L. Whittaker in Nanticoke on two counts each of possession with intent to deliver a controlled substance and possession of a controlled substance, and one count each of possession of drug paraphernalia and criminal conspiracy to deliver a controlled substance. Evans was further charged with illegal possession of a firearm.

Evans and Ruckman were jailed at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility, Wilkes-Barre, for lack of \$500,000 bail, each.

2/28/20

[Alleged prolific burglars face more charges](#)

A Nanticoke pair already charged in a prolific five-month burglary spree was hit Thursday with new charges alleging they burglarized two more properties in Newport Twp. William D. McDowell, 32, and Erika M. Bowersox, 28, are accused of burglarizing unoccupied homes at 11 E. Enterprise St. and 31 E. Enterprise St. on Dec. 26.

According to the complaint, they — along with another couple who have not yet been charged in the burglary — entered the properties and stole more than \$4,792 worth of property. The stolen goods included a \$1,759 Honda generator, a \$418 air compressor, numerous saws and other tools, and several gas-powered toy cars worth \$700, according to the complaint.

Police have now charged Bowersox and McDowell in six cases covering a burglary spree that stretched from September to January.

One alleged accomplice, Nanticoke resident Nicholas Jamilowski, 29, has been charged in two of the cases as well.

Meanwhile, Bowersox, who is now facing a total of 17 burglary charges — plus related offenses — is being held at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility with bail set at a combined \$645,000.

McDowell is now facing 18 total burglary counts, plus related offenses, and is being held without bail.

2/20/2020

[Nanticoke arms dealer sentenced to spend 7 months in federal prison](#)

A Nanticoke arms dealer will once again be spending time in a federal prison after admitting he illegally attempted to ship two rifle scopes to an individual in Russia in 2016. Mark Komoroski was sentenced last week after he previously entered a guilty plea on a felony count of attempting to evade export controls. He was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Malachy E. Mannion to spend seven months in a federal prison.

Komoroski, a former manager of D&R Sports Center on 620 Fairchild St., Nanticoke, was accused of attempting to export two of the rifle scopes to an individual in Russia in February and March 2016 without obtaining the necessary licenses required by federal law. The shop was raided by federal customs agents weeks later.

Komoroski was previously sentenced in 2010 to spend 32 months in prison on very similar charges, when he was accused of attempting to smuggle military equipment into Russia, including firearm magazines and scopes. He was released in late 2012.

In that case, authorities said they believed Komoroski had illegally exported hundreds of thousands of dollars in military equipment, including a nearly \$70,000 order for thermal-imaging devices from a Moscow-based company.

Komoroski's co-defendant in that case, Sergey Korznikov, a Russian national who was president of the Russian company that purchased the equipment, was sentenced to six months in prison.

In this most recent case, Komoroski's sentencing comes after a legal debate between parties over whether the attempted shipment of the scopes constituted a national security issue, with Komoroski's attorney, Al Flora Jr., arguing the scopes are also available for purchase commercially in Russia.

Flora filed an unopposed motion requesting Komoroski serve his sentence in the Federal

Correctional Complex at Allenwood, located partially in both Lycoming and Union counties, so he can be near his family.

2/19/2020

[Nanticoke arms dealer sentenced to prison](#)

A Nanticoke arms dealer who admitted he illegally shipped two rifle scopes bound for Russia has been sentenced to serve seven months in federal prison.

Mark Komoroski was sentenced Friday after previously pleading guilty to a felony count of attempting to evade export controls.

According to the charges, Komoroski failed to obtain the required export license for shipping arms to Russia before sending the scopes — which had a total value of less than \$2,500 — to undercover agents.

A central issue in Komoroski's sentencing was whether he evaded national security controls with the shipment — a finding that could have resulted in him being sentenced to more than five years in prison.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Carlo D. Marchioli wrote in a sentencing memorandum that prosecutors did not dispute that the Export Control Classification Number for the scopes was associated with crime control.

“But it does not follow that the applicable control is not a national security control,” Marchioli wrote. “As explained, the entire regulatory regime of the (Export Administration Regulations) is premised on national security. And indeed, all of the reasons for control listed above — including crime control — directly implicate the national security of the United States.”

Defense attorney Al Flora Jr., however, maintained that Komoroski should get a lower sentence because the scopes did not impact national security.

“The attempted export of these scopes did not threaten national security because these scopes are broadly available for sale in foreign countries, including Russia,” Flora wrote. On Friday, U.S. District Court Judge Malachy E. Mannion sentenced Komoroski to seven months in prison followed by two years of probation. Komoroski will also be required to pay a fine of \$1,000.

In a motion filed in court Tuesday, the parties request Mannion to recommend Komoroski serve his time at Federal Correctional Institution Allenwood so he can remain close to his family.

Komoroski, the owner of D&R Sports Center at 620 Fairchild St., was previously convicted of conspiracy to defraud the federal government after being accused of illegally selling and shipping \$247,854 worth of restricted items — rifles and related devices such as optics — to Russia, Kuwait, Germany and Japan without required export licenses.

In that case, Komoroski was sentenced to 32 months in prison.

2/15/2020

[Three charged in burglary spree in Nanticoke, Newport Township](#)

Dozens of charges were filed Friday against a trio who state and local police allege are responsible for a string of burglaries in the Nanticoke area in recent months.

The charges came after two of the trio were arrested last month, when police named the third individual as a person of interest.

William Davis McDowell, 32, and Erika May Bowersox, 28, were first arrested in January on burglary charges, but were hit with nearly 60 more charges related to a series of burglaries on Friday. Their alleged compatriot in at least one of the alleged burglaries, Nicholas Jamilowski, 29, was charged with eight counts related to his alleged role.

Court records show that all three appeared before Magisterial District Judge Donald L. Whittaker on Friday for their preliminary arraignment. The criminal complaints filed against them suggest it was January's arrest of McDowell and Bowersox that led to the subsequent charges.

McDowell and Bowersox were first arrested in mid-January after they allegedly broke into a Noble Street home in Nanticoke, coming in contact with the home's tenant, Eric Bieski, who chased McDowell and held him until police arrived.

While being questioned by police, McDowell identified Bowersox as his accomplice, and Bieski later picked her out of a photo lineup. McDowell also admitted to a series of other burglaries — eventually leading to Friday's charges — implicating both Bowersox and Jamilowski.

According to affidavits filed by both Nanticoke and Pennsylvania State police, the trio are implicated in the following robberies:

- McDowell and Bowersox allegedly broke into a home on Enterprise Street in Glen Lyon in mid-January. In later interviews, McDowell and Bowersox confessed to taking various antiques, toys and Christmas decorations, totaling \$500 worth of goods stolen, along with \$100 in damage to a door frame.**

- Bowersox and McDowell allegedly broke into other homes in the Newport Township area, including a double-block home on Robert Street, which they allegedly hit up twice, allegedly causing hundreds of dollars in damage and stealing nearly \$3,000 worth of goods. They were allegedly accompanied by other individuals, but charges have not been filed against them.**

- McDowell, Bowersox and Jamilowski allegedly broke into a home on East Grand Street in Nanticoke sometime between late November and mid-January — the owner of the home was not home in that time frame, but reported more than \$2,157 stolen. Several items, including a soda bottle, bottle of whisky and a bag of chips were left behind at the home. • McDowell told police he and Bowersox had gone to the home three times, with Jamilowski coming along once. It was allegedly Jamilowski who left behind the whisky and chips, while the soda was McDowell's.**

- Bowersox and McDowell were also accused of other break-ins around the area.**

McDowell, Bowersox and Jamilowski will all appear before Whittaker again on Feb. 26 for their preliminary hearing. All three remain locked up at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility, Wilkes-Barre, for lack of bail, especially McDowell and Bowersox who would need to pay bail on four separate cases in order to get out.

2/15/2020

[Nanticoke man facing drug-trafficking charges](#)

James Halpin - Citizens Voice

A Nanticoke man is facing drug-trafficking charges after state police say they caught him in possession of a cache of drugs during a traffic stop.

Police pulled over Darryl Darnell Mathis, 50, on state Route 11 in Shickshinny around 2:30 p.m. Tuesday for a traffic violation.

While speaking to Mathis, a trooper smelled marijuana and conducted a search, police said.

The search turned up crack cocaine, a white powder, methamphetamine, marijuana, Suoboxone strips, LSD, pills, a scale and \$500 in cash, police said.

Mathis was charged with drug trafficking, drug possession, possessing drug paraphernalia and driving with a suspended license.

He is free on \$15,000 bail with a preliminary hearing set for March 24.

2/7/2020

[Nanticoke man sentenced for raping young girl](#)

James Halpin - Citizens Voice

Nanticoke man convicted of repeatedly raping a girl starting when she was 8 years old was sentenced Thursday to up to 56 years in state prison.

Jason Buchanan, 38, was convicted by a jury in November on charges of rape of a child, statutory sexual assault, sexual assault, aggravated indecent assault, indecent assault on a child, unlawful contact with a minor and corruption of a minor.

According to prosecutors, Buchanan would come into the girl's bedroom and perform sex acts. Buchanan also warned the girl not to tell anyone because he "could get in so much trouble," prosecutors said.

Luzerne County President Judge Michael T. Vough imposed the sentence Thursday, ordering Buchanan to serve 28 to 56 years in prison.

Buchanan's wife, Evalynn Buchanan, 37, pleaded no contest in November to two felony counts of endangering the welfare of a child alleging she knew about the abuse but failed to stop it.

She was sentenced in December to two to four years in prison.

2/5/2020

[Nanticoke City Police Department](#)

02-04-2020

1826 Hrs. 174 East Green Street

Officers responded to 174 East Green Street on a call of a disturbance. While interviewing the person(s) involved officers noticed a strong smell of burnt marijuana emitting from a common area within the building. Officers were then approached by Lerico A. BLAND AKA "SOSA" who attempted to block officers from speaking with the witnesses. While doing so officers observed suspected crack cocaine, marijuana, plastic baggies, a digital scale, a handgun magazine and ammunition within the room. BLAND then attempted to destroy the evidence and resisted arrest prior to being subdued by officers.

BLAND was charged with the following:

Possession with intent to deliver a controlled substance

Possession of drug paraphernalia

Resisting arrest

Tampering with evidence

BLAND was lodged at Luzerne County Correctional Facility for lack of posting \$25,000 bail.

1/29/2020

Illegal video gambling machines seized

James Halpin - Citizens Voice

The Bureau of Liquor Control and Enforcement announced Tuesday that it has seized multiple illegal video gambling machines from two Luzerne County businesses.

Agents removed the machines from Park Market at 30 E. Broad St., Nanticoke, and Swizzle Stick at 434 Main St., Edwardsville, on Monday, authorities said.

The seizure is part of an ongoing investigation into illegal gambling.

1/28/2020

Nanticoke man charged in deadly crash fails to appear in court

A Nanticoke man accused of causing a deadly crash while driving under the influence is a wanted man after failing to appear in court Monday morning.

Jose Mariano Crespo Mendez, 22, was scheduled to enter a plea before Luzerne County Judge Richard M. Hughes III at 9 a.m. but was a no-show.

Hughes then revoked the \$50,000 bail Crespo Mendez previously posted and issued a bench warrant for his arrest.

Crespo Mendez is facing charges of vehicular homicide while DUI, reckless endangerment, fleeing police and DUI.

Prosecutors allege he killed Gerald Mosley, 72, while fleeing police trying to pull him over for traffic violations on May 24.

According to police, the high-speed chase began on Interstate 81 north near Exit 165 in Ashley and continued until the crash on East Main Street in Wilkes-Barre. Mosley died at Geisinger Wyoming Valley Medical Center on June 1.

Crespo Mendez was arrested May 24 and remained incarcerated at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility until posting bail Sept. 16.

Court records show that a month later, on Oct. 28, Wilkes-Barre city police cited Crespo Mendez for driving without a license and using a counterfeit inspection certificate.

Those cases remain inactive, with the summonses returned unclaimed, according to court records.

Prosecutors filed a motion to revoke Crespo Mendez's bail last week.

1/24/2020

Third person charged in Nanticoke burglary

City police arrested Nicholas Jamilowski for his alleged role in ransacking a residence on

Enterprise Street earlier this month.

Jamilowski was deemed by police as a person-of-interest when Erika May Bowersox, 28, and William Davis McDowell, 32, were arrested on allegations they burglarized an occupied home in the 100 block of East Noble Street just after 6 a.m. on Jan. 12.

About 90 minutes earlier on the same day, court records say the threesome teamed up to burglarized the Enterprise Street home at about 4:41 a.m., five minutes after the homeowner left for work.

Surveillance cameras recorded three people loitering outside the Enterprise Street home, police said.

Jamilowski was arraigned Wednesday night by District Judge Joseph Spagnuolo Jr. in Plains Township on charges of burglary, criminal trespass, theft and criminal conspiracy. He was jailed without bail at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility.

According to the criminal complaint:

The homeowner left his house at 4:41 a.m. to go to work and when he returned home just before 4 p.m., he discovered his home was burglarized.

Police said surveillance cameras recorded three people walking around the Enterprise Street home with one person appeared to be carrying a pry bar. They were also recorded carrying boxes from the house.

Pry marks were found around a basement window.

A video game system, video games, knives and batteries were stolen from the house, the complaint says.

Storage containers for video games were recovered from a neighbor's yard.

In a related case, police arrested McDowell minutes after he allegedly burglarized the occupied home on East Noble Street. Hours later, Bowersox was arrested at her residence for the East Noble Street heist.

During interviews with police, Bowersox and McDowell implicated Jamilowski in the burglary on Enterprise Street, the complaint says.

Bowersox allegedly told police video gaming equipment sell "quick."

Police recovered items from Bowersox's residence on West Union Street in Nanticoke on Jan. 13.

Bowersox and McDowell have not been charged for the Enterprise Street burglary but have been charged for the East Noble Street burglary and for ransacking a home on East Main Street in Hanover Township on Jan. 11, court records say.

1/23/2020

[Alleged Nanticoke bank robber extradited from Georgia](#)

A city man was extradited from Georgia this week on an arrest warrant charging him with robbing a branch of Citizens Bank on North Market Street last month.

Duwan Raymond, 31, last known address as West Noble Street, Nanticoke, is accused of passing a threatening note to a teller demanding cash on Dec. 18.

Raymond was captured by the U.S. Marshals Fugitive Task Force in Riverdale, Ga., on Jan. 8. He was extradited to Luzerne County on Tuesday.

According to the criminal complaint:

Raymond entered the bank and passed a note to a teller demanding \$100s, \$50s and \$20s

with instructions to the teller to only use her left hand or she would die.

The teller told police Raymond made motions with his hands to indicate he had a weapon in his pocket.

When the teller attempted to alert others, Raymond asked her if she wanted to die, the complaint says.

Raymond fled the bank with cash and was seen running across North Market Street behind the Nanticoke Post Office.

Police said Raymond ran to the Apollo Circle Apartment complex where he solicited a ride from a stranger for \$20 to drive him to the Marion Terrace Apartment Complex in Hanover Township.

Raymond was arraigned by District Judge Joseph Halsey in Hanover Township on two counts of robbery and one count each of theft, terroristic threats and simple assault. He was jailed at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility, Wilkes-Barre, for lack of \$200,000 bail.

1/22/2020

[Hanover Township police charge pair in string of burglaries](#)

Two suspects in a string of burglaries were arraigned and formally charged on Tuesday. William McDowell, 32 and Erika Bowersox, 28, both of Nanticoke, were charged with burglary and criminal trespass after reportedly breaking into a number of homes in Hanover Township and Nanticoke City on Jan. 11 and 12.

According to the criminal complaint:

A call came in to the Hanover Township Police on Jan. 12 around 3:30 p.m. for a report of forced entry into a home at 842 E. Main Street.

Upon arrival, police noticed that side door to the residence had been forced open. The caller was watching the home while the homeowner was visiting friends in Florida.

Police discovered a screwdriver and a small hacksaw on the sidewalk outside the property. They also noticed that the side door to the residence next door had also been open. They searched both homes but were unable to locate any suspects.

They did, however, locate a cell phone in the front yard of 842 E. Main St., registered to Bowersox, who was McDowell's girlfriend at the time.

McDowell had already been arrested in Nanticoke on Jan. 11 for a number of burglaries; after the location of her cell phone, Bowersox also was arrested by Nanticoke police.

The two were arraigned in front of Judge Joseph Halsey on Tuesday morning, and charged with three felony counts each of burglary, in addition to a number of related offenses.

Neither McDowell nor Bowersox was able to post \$50,000 bail and were committed to the Luzerne County Correctional Facility.

1/16/2020

[Roke sworn in as new Nanticoke police chief](#)

With his wife Kelly holding the Bible, and family, friends and coworkers watching from

around the Nanticoke Municipal Building, Michael Roke was sworn in as the new police chief Wednesday night.

“It’s a once-in-a-lifetime experience. That’s for sure,” Roke said. “We’ve been speaking about this now for a few months, and it’s great to get to the point where we can start implementing some of our plans.”

Kevin Coughlin, Nanticoke’s newly inaugurated mayor, said Roke — previously a lieutenant — has almost 25 years of experience on the job. Although Robert Lehman has served as the interim chief since the end of August, Coughlin said Lehman’s detective skills were too valuable.

Coughlin said Lehman and Roke were the only two who applied for the position.

“He is a terrific detective,” Coughlin said of Lehman. “I’d rather have someone like that out on the streets doing work for the citizens of the city.”

Coughlin said Roke brings “a lot of energy to the job” and, as the city is going to be “coming down” on dilapidated properties, he said Roke has a lot of good ideas. Coughlin added that Roke was “assertive” and will get the job done.

Roke’s first act as police chief was taking care of a parking violation issue right in the municipal meeting room. A concerned citizen brought up multiple parking violations in front of his home, and Roke responded by assuring the Nanticoke resident the cars would be taken care of.

Coughlin said watching Roke handle the issue strengthened his faith in Roke.

“It’s one of our goals to go forward with the junk vehicles that are on properties that are problematic,” Roke said. “I’ve spoken with the mayor since he’s been inaugurated, and that’s one of the things that we did do to forward the agenda.”

Roke said there are plans set up to work hand-in-hand with code enforcement to address the status of properties, and he also plans to tackle the drug problem in Nanticoke.

“I appreciate the confidence the mayor and council have for me,” Roke said. “We’re certainly going to try to move the city forward.”

1/13/2020

[Police arrests two people after reported burglary](#)

City police arrested two people and are looking for another person deemed a person-of-interest in a string of Nanticoke burglaries that have taken place in recent months.

William Davis McDowell, 32, and Erika May Bowersox, 28, addresses listed as homeless, were arrested after allegedly breaking into a residence in the 100 block of East Noble Street just after 6 a.m. Sunday.

Police allege McDowell and Bowersox entered the residence through a kitchen window. When they were confronted by the homeowner, police said McDowell and Bowersox left through a door.

The homeowner chased McDowell for more than a block and was held until police arrived on scene.

During the course of the investigation, McDowell admitted to being involved in other burglaries in recent months in Nanticoke, police said.

Those cases are being investigated.

Police said they continue to search for Nicholas Jamilowski, 29, who is reported to be a person-of-interest.

McDowell was arraigned Sunday by District Judge Donald Whittaker in Nanticoke on charges of burglary, criminal trespass, criminal conspiracy, loitering and prowling at night and possession of a controlled substance. He was jailed at the Luzerne County Correctional Facility without bail.

Bowersox was arraigned Monday by Whittaker on charges of burglary, criminal trespass, criminal conspiracy and loitering and prowling at night. She was jailed for lack of \$75,000 bail.

1/9/2020

[Nanticoke bank robbery suspect caught in Georgia](#)

Bob Kalinowski - Citizens Voice

U.S. Marshals captured a Nanticoke bank robbery suspect in Fulton County, Georgia, on Wednesday afternoon, the U.S. Marshal Service and Nanticoke police announced Wednesday.

Members of the U.S. Marshal Service Fugitive Task Force apprehended Duwan Raymond, 31, just before 12:30 p.m. in Riverdale, Georgia.

City police accuse Raymond of robbing Citizens' Bank at 75 N. Market St. on Dec. 18. He is charged with robbery and related offenses.

Police said Raymond was wanted for failing to appear in court on charges of receiving stolen property in Luzerne County and assault in Philadelphia.

After being taken into custody, Raymond was jailed in the Fulton County Jail to await extradition back to Luzerne County.

The U.S. Marshal Service in Scranton coordinated the operation to capture Raymond with the assistance of the state police at Wyoming, the Scranton FBI office, Scranton police, the state Board of Probation and Parole and the Luzerne County District Attorney's Office.

"The U.S. Marshals Service and its task force partners work jointly to ensure those that flee to another jurisdiction are captured and brought to justice. These joint efforts ensure that our communities are safer for all our citizens," said Martin Pane, U.S. Marshal for the Middle District of Pennsylvania.

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