



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**DECEMBER 30, 2003**  
**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **SPRINGFIELD MAN SENTENCED FOR ASSAULTING OFFICERS, POSSESSION OF CRACK COCAINE**

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Springfield, Mo., man was sentenced in federal court today for assaulting federal law enforcement officers and for possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine.

**Ronnie C. Gaines**, 34, of Springfield, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Richard E. Dorr this afternoon to 17 years and six months in federal prison without parole. He also was ordered to pay \$2,109.46 in restitution.

On Aug. 13, 2003, **Gaines** pleaded guilty to possession with intent to distribute in excess of five grams of crack cocaine. **Gaines** also pleaded guilty to two counts of assault on a federal law enforcement officer by means of a dangerous weapon, that is, by attempting to strike them with his car.

By pleading guilty, Graves said, **Gaines** admitted that he was in possession of 16.1 grams of crack cocaine on April 24, 2003, which he intended to distribute to another person. While attempting to arrest **Gaines** on that date, Graves said, he assaulted two Drug Enforcement Administration agents with his automobile and led law enforcement officers on a high-speed pursuit through downtown Springfield.

While **Gaines'** vehicle was stopped in a line of traffic at the intersection of Grand Avenue and Fort Street in Springfield, Graves said, he was approached by law enforcement officers who were monitoring a controlled drug transaction. The agents and officers exited their vehicles and approached **Gaines'** vehicle from the front and the rear. **Gaines** placed his vehicle in reverse, striking and forcing back the officer's vehicle parked behind him. **Gaines** then placed his vehicle in drive and swerved to the left, forcing another law enforcement vehicle to take

evasive action to avoid being struck. **Gaines** accelerated forward, toward two DEA agents who were approaching his vehicle on foot, forcing them to take evasive action to avoid being struck.

While leading officers on a high-speed pursuit (reaching speeds in excess of 60 miles per hour), **Gaines** threw three plastic bags out of the driver's side window of the vehicle. Two of the bags contained crack cocaine, Graves said, and one of the bags contained marijuana. During the chase, **Gaines** struck a vehicle occupied by a driver and a young child. An unidentified passenger was thrown from **Gaines'** vehicle in that collision, but no injuries were reported.

Neither **Gains** nor his passenger were apprehended on that day. **Gaines** was later apprehended in California.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robyn L. McKee. It was investigated by the Missouri State Highway Patrol and the Drug Enforcement Administration.

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This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at  
[www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow](http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow)