



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

TODD P. GRAVES

Contact Don Ledford, Public Affairs • (816) 426-4220 • 400 East Ninth Street, Room 5510 • Kansas City, MO 64106

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow

AUGUST 21, 2003
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

PROJECT CEASEFIRE
**ONE FELON SENTENCED MORE THAN 15 YEARS,
TWO MORE PLEAD GUILTY TO FIREARMS CHARGES**

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that one felon was sentenced and two more pleaded guilty, in separate and unrelated cases, today for violating federal firearms laws.

* **John R. Meier**, 34, who currently is in state custody in Kansas, was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr., this morning to 15 years and eight months in federal prison without parole.

On May 22, 2003, **Meier** pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm. By pleading guilty, he admitted that he was in possession of a Taurus .40 caliber pistol beginning on Oct. 20, 2001, and continuing until Oct. 24, 2001. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Meier** has eight prior criminal felony convictions from 1988 until 1990. His criminal felony convictions include criminal attempt to commit aggravated motor vehicle theft, criminal attempted theft, aggravated assault of a law enforcement officer, aggravated battery of a law enforcement officer, aggravated escape, assault with a firearm on a police officer and felony theft.

Meier was originally charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Dec. 20, 2003, in Kansas City.

The case was being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Linda Sybrant. It was investigated by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **David E. Nagles**, 49, of Kansas City, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Howard F. Sachs this morning to being a felon in possession of a firearm.

By pleading guilty, **Nagles** admitted that he was in possession of a Wards Western Field 16-gauge shotgun, a New England Firearms 12-gauge shotgun, an Eastern Arms Company 20-gauge shotgun, a Marlin 30-30 rifle, a Marlin .22 caliber rifle, and a Ruger .22 caliber revolver on July 11, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Nagles** has five prior criminal felony convictions from 1971 to 1981. The convictions include auto theft, burglary and stealing.

Nagles was originally charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on July 22, 2003, in Kansas City.

As a result of pleading guilty, **Nagles** may be subject to a maximum sentence of 10 years in federal prison without parole. His sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

The case was being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelsen. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

* **Sylvester Cornelius**, 22, of Kansas City, pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Scott O. Wright this afternoon to being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Cornelius pled guilty subject to right to appeal on the denial of his request that the evidence be suppressed.

By pleading guilty, **Cornelius** admitted that he was in possession of a Rohm-GMBH .38 caliber revolver on Jan. 20, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Cornelius** has four 2000 criminal felony convictions for distribution of illegal drugs.

Cornelius was originally charged with being a felon in possession of a firearm in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on March 11, 2003, in Kansas City.

As a result of pleading guilty, **Cornelius** may be subject to a maximum sentence of not less than 15 years in federal prison without parole. His sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

The case was being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Linda Sybrant. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Project Ceasefire

Project Ceasefire, launched in October 1999, is a cooperative initiative by federal and local law enforcement and the Kansas City Crime Commission that targets persons who

unlawfully use or possess firearms for federal prosecution. Project Ceasefire has resulted in federal charges against 480 defendants, and convictions against 396 of those defendants, including 371 who pleaded guilty and 25 who were convicted at trial. A total of 347 of the 378 convicted defendants have been sentenced, and 31 currently await sentencing hearings.

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