



# NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

**TODD P. GRAVES**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

OPERATION X-POSED  
**TWO MORE DEFENDANTS PLEAD GUILTY  
IN SOUTHWEST MISSOURI'S  
LARGEST ECSTASY RING**

**SPRINGFIELD, Mo.** – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that two more defendants pleaded guilty in federal court today in Operation X-Posed, an investigation into ecstasy, cocaine and methamphetamine trafficking in Greene County.

Operation X-Posed was a long-term, multi-agency investigation into the distribution of tens of thousands of ecstasy tablets throughout southwest Missouri, as well as the Kansas City and St. Louis areas. "This was the largest ecstasy ring ever prosecuted in southwest Missouri," Graves said.

A series of five indictments returned by a federal grand jury meeting in Springfield on April 3, 2003, also charge some defendants with distributing cocaine and methamphetamine, as well as money laundering and firearms violations. The indictments seek the forfeiture of several vehicles and nearly \$400,000 in cash, all of which was allegedly derived from illegal drug sales or used in the conspiracy to distribute illegal drugs.

**Corey J. Merriman**, 26, and **Monica L. Losack**, 23, both of Springfield, pleaded guilty before U.S. Magistrate Judge James C. England this morning to their role in one of the conspiracies uncovered by Operation X-Posed. Two other co-defendants in a separate but related indictment have also pleaded guilty, Graves said.

By pleading guilty today, **Merriman** and **Losack** admitted they were involved in a conspiracy to distribute ecstasy in Greene County between April 2001 and Sept. 11, 2001. During the course of the conspiracy, Graves said, **Merriman** distributed at least 20,000 ecstasy tablets to others for redistribution in the Springfield, Kansas City and St. Louis areas. **Losack**, Graves said,

distributed or assisted in distributing 160 ecstasy tablets during the course of the conspiracy.

**Merriman** also admitted to money laundering, Graves said. **Merriman** conspired to conduct financial transactions that involved the proceeds of the illegal ecstasy distribution. When **Merriman** sold ecstasy, Graves explained, he used those proceeds to pay his supplier, to purchase more ecstasy, and for deposit into his personal bank account (where it was co-mingled with funds from legitimate sources). **Merriman** also deposited drug proceeds directly into the personal bank account of his supplier.

**Merriman** also agreed to the forfeiture of \$21,000 that was seized by law enforcement authorities, which constitutes the proceeds of drug trafficking activities.

On June 4, 2003, **Anthony J. Ford**, 32, of Springfield, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to distribute ecstasy. During the course of the conspiracy, Graves said, **Ford** distributed between 4,700 and 5,100 ecstasy tablets that he received from sources in Brooklyn, N.Y., to others involved in the conspiracy for redistribution in the Springfield area. **Ford** also distributed between 1,675 and 3,900 ecstasy tablets that he received from a different source. **Ford** also agreed to forfeit a 1996 Nissan Pathfinder, which was purchased with proceeds from the sale of ecstasy, and \$1,627 seized from him by law enforcement authorities.

On May 30, 2003, **Meg Thibodeaux**, 29, of Brooklyn, N.Y., pleaded guilty to a conspiracy to distribute ecstasy. **Thibodeaux** received from 4,700 to 5,100 ecstasy tablets from a source in Brooklyn, Graves said, which she sent by courier or Federal Express to others for distribution in Springfield.

As a result of today's plea agreement, **Merriman** could be subject to a sentence of up to 40 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$1.5 million. **Merriman's** sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of presentence investigation by the U.S. Probation Office.

As a result of today's plea agreement, **Losack** could be subject to a sentence of up to 20 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$1 million. **Losack's** sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of presentence investigation by the U.S. Probation Office.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Robyn L. McKee. The case was investigated by the Springfield, Mo., Police Department, COMET (the Combined Ozarks Multi-jurisdictional Enforcement Team), the Drug Enforcement Administration, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Internal Revenue Service, and the United States Postal Inspection Service.

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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

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