



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

DECEMBER 31, 2003
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KC FELON CHARGED WITH ILLEGAL POSSESSION OF FIREARM FOLLOWING VEHICLE, FOOT PURSUIT

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Kansas City man was charged today in federal court with being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Roy Thorton, 31, of Kansas City, Mo., was charged in a criminal complaint filed this morning in U.S. District Court in Kansas City.

The criminal complaint alleges that **Thorton** was in possession of a Smith and Wesson .40 caliber pistol on Dec. 31, 2003. Under federal law, Graves explained, it is illegal for any felon to be in possession of any firearm or ammunition. **Thorton** has three 1993 criminal felony convictions for assault on a law enforcement officer, armed criminal action and unlawful use of a weapon.

According to an affidavit filed in support of the complaint, **Thorton** was arrested after law enforcement officers noticed a 1990 Chevrolet Suburban traveling at a high rate of speed at approximately 2:24 a.m., today in the area of 39th Street and Brooklyn. At that time, the officers began to pursue the vehicle, which began to accelerate and drive into oncoming lanes of traffic.

When the vehicle eventually stopped near 33rd Street, the driver, who was later identified as **Thorton**, exited the automobile and began running, the affidavit states. Law enforcement officers continued to pursue **Thorton** on foot as he jumped two fences. Shortly after, law enforcement officers observed him throw an object from his right hand onto the ground, which later was determined to be the Smith and Wesson handgun. Officers also discovered a magazine loaded with 11 rounds of ammunition, located not far from the handgun.

Thorton was eventually taken into custody, following a brief scuffle with law enforcement officers, the affidavit states.

Graves cautioned that the charge contained in the complaint is simply an accusation, and is not evidence of guilt. Evidence supporting the charge must be presented to a federal trial jury, whose duty is to determine guilt or innocence.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Jess E. Michaelsen. It was investigated by the Kansas City, Mo., Police Department.

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