



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

MARCH 19, 2003
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

KC MAN CONVICTED IN COCAINE CONSPIRACY

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Kansas City man was convicted by a federal jury today for his role as the supplier in a conspiracy to distribute crack cocaine from his home, less than a block from Center Elementary School.

Clarence J. Walton, 33, of Kansas City, Mo., was found guilty of one count of conspiracy to distribute 50 grams or more of crack cocaine in Jackson County, Mo., from Jan. 14 to Feb. 14, 2002, and one count of possession with intent to distribute 50 grams or more of crack cocaine in Jackson County on Feb. 14, 2002. **Walton** was initially charged with those crimes in an indictment returned by a federal grand jury on Aug. 27, 2002. Jurors found **Walton** guilty of both counts charged in the indictment.

In his closing argument, Graves asked the jury to “send the defendant a message that we will not put up with drug houses in our community.”

“We will not willingly allow drug dealers to operate in our neighborhoods, especially in the same neighborhoods where our children attend school,” Graves added.

Following **Walton’s** trial, Graves said, the jury in U.S. District Court in Kansas City deliberated less than two hours before returning the guilty verdicts to U.S. District Judge Ortrie D. Smith, ending a trial that began March 18, 2003.

Evidence presented during the trial related a series of six undercover drug buys in less than a month in which **Walton** was the supplier, Graves said. In each case, an agent with the Jackson County Drug Task Force was taken to **Walton’s** residence at 1810 E. 85th Street, Kansas City, Mo., to deliver payment for crack cocaine and receive the drug. Graves explained that the undercover agent first approached co-defendants **Leonard E. Sims**, 32, and **Roger L. Sims**, 59, a father and son who were living together in a room at the Sports Stadium Motel, 9803 E. Highway 40, Independence, Mo., then was transported by one of them to **Walton’s** residence to

complete the transaction. A total of more than 40 grams of crack cocaine was purchased during these six transactions between Jan. 14 and Feb. 12, 2003.

On Feb. 3, 2003, **Roger Sims** pleaded guilty to two counts of distributing crack cocaine and two counts of distributing five grams or more of crack cocaine. On the same date, **Leonard Sims** pleaded guilty to one count of distributing crack cocaine and one count of distributing five grams or more of crack cocaine. They are both awaiting sentencing.

Following that series of undercover drug buys, officers obtained a search warrant for **Walton's** residence, a rented home near the intersection of 85th Street and The Paseo. In the execution of that search warrant on Feb. 14, 2003, they discovered approximately 56 grams of crack cocaine, approximately 257 grams of marijuana, approximately 2 grams of PCP, various drug paraphernalia, and a .44 caliber Ruger pistol with 14 live rounds of ammunition.

As a result of today's conviction, **Walton** may be subject to a mandatory minimum sentence of 20 years in federal prison without parole. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled upon the completion of a presentence report. The sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The case is being prosecuted by U.S. Attorney Todd P. Graves and Assistant U.S. Attorney Gregg R. Coonrod. The case was investigated by the Jackson County Drug Task Force.

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