



Kansas Bureau of Investigation

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Drug operation ends with six arrests in Miami and Linn counties

MIAMI & LINN COUNTY – On Wednesday morning, the Kansas Bureau of Investigation (KBI), the Miami County Sheriff's Office, the Linn County Sheriff's Office, the Osawatomie Police Department, and the Pleasanton Police Department arrested six individuals in Miami and Linn counties for distribution of methamphetamine and other charges.

The investigation began in December of 2022, when the Osawatomie Police Department developed information about area drug sales. Then, on Wednesday, March 22, between 6 a.m. and 8:30 a.m., KBI agents and investigators executed search warrants and arrest warrants at a residence in rural Osawatomie, Kansas, and at two residences in La Cygne, Kansas. During the searches, law enforcement located methamphetamine and over \$12,000 in cash. During the joint investigation, over 1.5 pounds of methamphetamine was seized, some of which is believed to contain fentanyl.

Six subjects were arrested.

Charles Eslick Jr., 49, of Osawatomie, was arrested for distribution of a controlled substance, conspiracy, unlawful possession of drug paraphernalia, and distribution or possession of a controlled substance using a communication facility.

Deanne Burkhart, 55, of Osawatomie, was arrested for distribution of a controlled substance, and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Julia R. Spears, 50, of Osawatomie, was arrested for distribution of a controlled substance, conspiracy, and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Bernie E. Stuteville, 60, of La Cygne, was arrested for distribution of a controlled substance, conspiracy, and possession of drug paraphernalia.

Danny R. Harper, 58, of Osawatomie, was arrested for distribution of controlled substance, and possession of drug paraphernalia.

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Cindy M. Ballou, 45, of Osawatomie, was arrested during the search warrant for having outstanding warrants for driving while suspended with no proof of insurance.

Following their arrests, the subjects were each booked into the Miami County Jail. Formal charges are pending. All suspects are presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.

Also assisting in this investigation were Homeland Security Investigations (HSI), the Kansas Highway Patrol (KHP), the La Cygne Police Department, the Ottawa Police Department, and the Paola Police Department. The investigation is ongoing.

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