



U.S. Department of Justice

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Eastern District of Michigan

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For Immediate Release:

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January 31, 2008

EVENT: Conviction

Defendant: William Lee Sparks

HOLLY MAN CONVICTED OF DEALING PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Court to Determine at Sentencing Defendant's Role in Death Of 25-Year-Old Navy Sailor

William Lee Sparks, 57, of Holly, Michigan, was convicted in United States District Court today to distributing the prescription drugs percocet, codeine, and Xanax, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. Joining in the announcement was Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge, Detroit FBI, and Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard.

As part of the plea agreement, Sparks agreed to allow the Court to determine whether the evidence also showed that he distributed fentanyl in a manner that resulted in the death of another person.

According to information presented to the Court, Sparks, an army veteran, sold drugs that he had obtained from doctors at Veterans Administration facilities in Ann Arbor and Flint to treat various medical conditions.

The Indictment charged Sparks with distributing controlled substances resulting in the death of another person. The documents presented to the Court alleged that Jason Lee

Cremer, a 25-year-old navy sailor from Ortonville stationed at the U.S. Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, Florida bought drugs from Sparks. Cremer had visited Sparks while on leave during the Labor Day holiday in 2005. Cremer returned to his posting in Florida, where he died of a drug overdose on September 12, 2005. According to the Jacksonville County Medical Examiner, the cause of death was fentanyl toxicity, a finding confirmed by Oakland County Medical Examiner L.J. Dragovic.

United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy said, "Prescription drug abuse is a serious and growing threat, one which carries dangerous consequences both for users and for society. The Naval Criminal Investigative Service and the Oakland County Sheriff are to be commended for their determination in getting to the bottom of this case."

Distribution of controlled substances is punishable by up to 20 years' imprisonment. Pursuant to his plea agreement, Sparks is facing a sentence of 2 1/2 to 5 years. At sentencing, the court is to consider whether Sparks distributed fentanyl to Cremer and whether fentanyl toxicity was the cause of Cremer's death. No sentencing date has been set.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys David Gardey and Leonid Feller.