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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
February 1, 2008**

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**FIVE MORE DEFENDANTS CONVICTED ON FEDERAL CHARGES
ARISING FROM UNDERCOVER STOREFRONT INVESTIGATION**

AUGUSTA, Ga. – Edmund A. Booth, Jr., United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, announced today that during this past week five more defendants were convicted of federal crimes arising from the recent undercover storefront operation entitled “Augusta Ink.” This means that twenty-six (26) federal defendants have been convicted as a result of that operation. The five defendants appeared before U.S. District Judge Dudley H. Bowen Jr. in U.S. District Court in Augusta where each entered a guilty plea to various federal firearms or drug offenses. The names of those convicted along with the offenses of conviction and the maximum statutory penalties faced are set forth on the attached chart. Booth stated that after pre-trial investigations and reports have been completed, sentencing dates will be scheduled for each defendant.

Booth commended the collaborative efforts of the Richmond County Sheriff’s Office and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) in the undercover operation that led to these convictions. Booth noted that these cases were federally prosecuted as part of the district’s Project Ceasefire initiative, a program devoted to reducing gun violence by prosecuting individuals found in possession of firearms who cannot legally possess them, such as felons and drug dealers; and through the district’s Anti-Gang initiative.

Thirty-five (35) other federal defendants formally charged in this investigation are awaiting trial, while one defendant remains at-large. The Government is being represented in these prosecutions by Assistant United States Attorneys Nancy C. Greenwood and Patricia G. Johnson.

14-08

FELONY CONVICTIONS IN FEDERAL AUGUSTA INK CASES

Defendant(s)	Date of Guilty Plea	Federal Offense(s) Of Conviction and Maximum Statutory Penalty
BALAAM BENJAMIN GRINNAGE, a.k.a. "Bizo	1/30/08	Felon in Possession of a Firearm (1 count), maximum penalty 10 years imprisonment, each count. 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)
GEORGE EDWARDS, JR.	1/30/08	Distribution of 5 Grams or More of Cocaine Base (Crack), not less than 5 years, nor more than 40 years imprisonment. 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)
AMTRON QUINTEZ MCCLADDIE aka Antron McCladdie	1/31/08	Felon in Possession of a Firearm (1 count), maximum penalty 10 years imprisonment, each count. 18 U.S.C. § 922(g)
MARQUELL WASHINGTON	1/31/08	Possession of a Firearm Having an Obliterated Serial Number, maximum penalty 5 years imprisonment. 18 U.S.C. § 922(k)
JERELL DEANGELO WILSON	1/31/08	Distribution of Marijuana (1 count), maximum penalty 5 years imprisonment, each count. 21 U.S.C. § 841(a)