



# Department of Justice

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias  
Northern District of Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

02/28/08

<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/gan/>

CONTACT: Patrick Crosby

(404)581-6016

FAX (404)581-6160

## **FORMER CITY OF ROCKMART POLICE OFFICER** **SENTENCED TO 20 YEARS IN PRISON**

### *Crimes Included Firearms and Fraud Charges*

Rome, GA - JEDSON EDWARD LEIST, 36, of Acworth, Georgia, was sentenced this morning to 20 years in federal prison by United States District Judge Robert L. Vining, Jr., for crimes including false statements; wire and mail fraud; possession of a firearm by a felon and by a domestic violence misdemeanor; and a mail and wire fraud scheme involving the use of fake fingerprints.

United States Attorney David E. Nahmias said, "The evidence proved that Leist, with help from his wife, circumvented the gun laws that prohibit a convicted felon from possessing a firearm. With a set of clean fingerprints and help from a co-conspirator, Leist lied to the Rockmart Police Department and the FBI so that he could acquire a badge and carry a gun despite his criminal past. In convicting Leist, the jury unequivocally condemned these criminal acts as unacceptable. The 20 year prison sentence speaks for itself."

LEIST was sentenced to 20 years in federal prison, to be followed by 5 years of supervised release. There is no parole in the federal system. On January 31, 2008, LEIST's wife, INGRID ARNETH, 46, also of Acworth, was sentenced to 1 year, 3 months in prison, to be followed by a term of 2 years of supervised release. Another co-defendant, a former Rockmart Police officer, awaits trial, which is scheduled for March, 11, 2008.

According to Nahmias and the evidence presented in court: LEIST was charged with possessing firearms after having been previously convicted of a felony and a misdemeanor crime of domestic violence, making it illegal for him to possess firearms. Another then-officer was charged with providing LEIST with a firearm knowing that LEIST could not lawfully possess guns. The evidence showed LEIST and the other former officer knowingly used a document that contained materially false statements, as well as mail and wire fraud, in connection with their submission of a fake fingerprint as part of LEIST's job application to the Rockmart City Police Department. LEIST acquired

the fingerprints from a relative. The other officer, in charge of conducting LEIST's background check signed the fingerprint card and represented that the prints were those of LEIST. The fingerprint card was submitted by mail to the FBI, which faxed back its response. LEIST and ARNETH also made false representations to gun dealers when she purchased guns for LEIST, while claiming that the guns were for herself. Over a two and a half year period, ARNETH purchased approximately 29 guns, including the two guns used by LEIST as his police service weapon and back-up weapon.

In November 2007, after a trial lasting six days, a federal jury returned guilty verdicts against LEIST on weapons and fraud charges and against his wife ARNETH on fraud charges.

This case was investigated by Special Agents of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives (ATF) and Special Agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI).

Assistant United States Attorney Bret R. Williams prosecuted the case.

For further information please contact David E. Nahmias (pronounced NAH-me-us), United States Attorney, or Charysse L. Alexander, Executive Assistant United States Attorney, through Patrick Crosby, Public Affairs Officer, U.S. Attorney's Office, at (404) 581-6016. The Internet address for the HomePage for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Northern District of Georgia.