



Department of Justice

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SEVEN HIDDEN VALLEY KINGS MEMBERS SENTENCED FOR ROLES IN
DRUG CONSPIRACY

Local Gang Responsible for Drug Conspiracy

CHARLOTTE, NC—Seven members of Charlotte’s “Hidden Valley Kings” were sentenced in U.S. District Court in Charlotte today for their participation in a drug distribution conspiracy United States Attorney Gretchen C.F. Shappert for the Western District of North Carolina announced.

Roscoe Abell, Emmanuel Ellis Keller, Jermer Olivette Lowery, Danielle Jermaine Jackson, Chavius Marquette Barber, Lorenzo Lee Johnson, and Alonzo Lee Johnson were sentenced today by U.S. District Judge Frank D. Whitney of the Western District of North Carolina.

Roscoe Abell, 30, Charlotte - 240 months, 50 years of supervised release
Emmanuel Ellis Keller, 25, Charlotte - 293 months, 25 years of supervised release
Jermer Olivette Lowery, 28, Charlotte - 120 months, 10 years of supervised release
Danielle Jermaine Jackson, 26, Charlotte - 310 months, 10 years of supervised release
Chavius Marquette Barber, 25, Charlotte - 240 months, 20 years of supervised release
Lorenzo Lee Johnson, 26, Charlotte - 240 months, 10 years of supervised release
Alonzo Lee Johnson, 24, Charlotte - 160 months, Five years of supervised release

Joining U.S. Attorney Shappert in making today’s announcement are FBI Special Agent in Charge of North Carolina operations, Nathan T. Gray, and Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Chief Rodney Monroe.

Those sentenced today pleaded guilty to drug conspiracy and/or drug distribution and federal firearms charges. The drug conspiracy lasted from around June 2003 until March of 2007 when the federal indictment was filed and many of the group were arrested and placed in federal custody. The conspiracy was responsible for the distribution and possession with intent to distribute large quantities of cocaine and “crack” cocaine, marijuana, and “ecstasy,” and was carried out by members of the local criminal street gang known as “Hidden Valley Kings,” or associates and/or narcotics suppliers or dealers with Hidden Valley Kings members.

The defendants sentenced today were each born and raised in Charlotte. Information brought out in court today showed that the Hidden Valley Kings has been an organized group in Charlotte since the 1990's. The Hidden Valley Kings made their money from the sale of

narcotics in and around Charlotte's Hidden Valley neighborhood, and named themselves after that community where many of the members resided at one time or another and where they attempted to control all narcotics dealing.

Including the seven defendants who were sentenced today, there were 20 individuals charged in the Hidden Valley Kings drug conspiracy. An additional six of the Hidden Valley Kings defendants will be sentenced in federal court on Wednesday, December 10 and all remaining defendants will be sentenced on Thursday, December 11.

The Department of Justice has enacted a comprehensive plan across its many components to effectively fight and limit the impact of gang violence nationwide. This plan includes two primary elements: Prioritize prevention programs to provide youth, as well as offenders returning to the community, with opportunities that help them resist gang involvement; and ensure robust enforcement policies when gang-related violence does occur. This approach also recognizes the critical need for the Department to continue to work hand-in-hand with state and local law enforcement and local community groups.

A joint investigation by the FBI's Safe Streets Task Force in Charlotte, a specialized gang investigation team, culminated in the 55-count federal bill of indictment against the Hidden Valley Kings. The Safe Streets Task Force in Charlotte is comprised of agents and officers representing ATF, FBI, ICE, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, Gastonia Police Department, and Mecklenburg County Sheriff's Office. Safe Streets Task Forces were created to address the U.S. Justice Department's priority of addressing criminal gang activity nationwide. The Safe Streets program of the FBI has increased the number of Safe Streets Task Forces nationwide to 189, with 148 focusing on violent gangs and 41 focusing on violent crime. For more information about the Justice Department's comprehensive efforts to fight gang violence, visit the government's web site www.psn.gov.

According to statistics compiled by the NC Criminal Justice Analysis Center of the North Carolina Governor's Crime Commission and reported in March 2008 regarding "reported gangs in North Carolina 2007 /2008," there were 1,832 gang suspects and affiliates in NC reported by state law enforcement agencies through "NC GangNet" in early 2008. Among other findings, the Governor's Crime Commission Criminal Gang Study 2008 states, "...the most commonly reported crime [committed by gangs and gang members] was drug possession with 65 percent of the gangs engaging in this behavior." To view the full report, visit <http://www.ncgccd.org/pubs/gangs2008.pdf>.

The prosecution is being handled for the government by Assistant United States Attorney Kevin Zolot, Gang Coordinator for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of North Carolina.