



U.S. Department of Justice

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Eastern District of Michigan

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For Immediate Release:
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Event: Sentenced

Defendant: William Lee Sparks

HOLLY MAN SENTENCED TO 2 ½ YEARS FOR DEALING PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

Distribution of Fentanyl Resulted in Death of 25-Year-Old Navy Sailor

William Lee Sparks, 58, of Holly was sentenced to 30 months imprisonment in federal court today on felony drug charges, Acting United States Attorney Terrence Berg announced. Joining in the announcement was Oakland County Sheriff Michael Bouchard, John W. Brooks, Special Agent in Charge, Department of Veterans Affairs, Office of Inspector General, Criminal Investigative Division, and the Naval Criminal Investigative Services.

Sparks pleaded guilty to distributing controlled substances, including fentanyl patches, percocet, codeine, and Xanax before United States District Judge Avern Cohn on January 31, 2008. An army veteran, Sparks obtained the prescription drugs from doctors at Veterans Administration facilities in Ann Arbor and Flint to treat various medical conditions.

Jason Lee Cremer, a 25-year-old navy sailor from Ortonville stationed at the U.S. Naval Air Station in Jacksonville, Florida obtained drugs from Sparks while on leave during the Labor Day holiday in 2005. Cremer returned to his posting in Florida, where he ingested the fentanyl and other substances and 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.

Acting United States Attorney Terrence Berg 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, the Oakland County Sheriff's Office and the Department of Veterans Affairs are to be commended for their determination in getting to the bottom of this case."

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