



**U.S. Department of Justice**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
November 18, 2008**

**CONTACT: Edmund A. Booth, Jr.  
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**SIXTY - FIRST DEFENDANT CONVICTED ON FEDERAL CHARGES  
ARISING FROM OPERATION AUGUSTA INK**

**AUGUSTA, Ga.** – Edmund A. Booth, Jr., United States Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia, announced today, that Darren Rouse, age 19, of Augusta, became the sixty- first (61<sup>st</sup>) defendant to be convicted in the undercover storefront operation entitled “Augusta Ink.” Rouse appeared in the U.S. District Court on Monday, November 17, 2008, and entered a guilty plea to Possession of Stolen Firearms in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 922(j) and Distribution of Cocaine Base in violation of 21 U.S.C. § 841.

According to Booth, Rouse faces a statutory maximum of 10 years imprisonment, a \$250,000 fine, and 3 years of supervised release on the firearms conviction, and 40 years imprisonment, a \$2,000,000 fine, and 4 years of supervised release on the narcotics conviction. A sentencing date will be scheduled following completion of a pre-sentence investigation and report.

Booth stated that Rouse’s conviction arose out of Operation Augusta Ink, the 16-month undercover operation conducted out of the “Colur Tyme” Tattoo Parlor on Tobacco Road in Hephzibah, Georgia. Sheriff Ronald Strength and the Richmond County Sheriff’s Office initiated the investigation in the Summer of 2006, and within a few months, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives joined in the operation, bringing additional resources and personnel to assist in the effort.

Booth noted that this case was 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. The Government was represented by Assistant United States Attorney Patricia G. Johnson.

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