



NEWS RELEASE

UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE WESTERN DISTRICT OF VIRGINIA

John L. Brownlee
United States Attorney

Heidi Coy
Media Contact

Thomas B. Mason Building
105 Franklin Rd., S.W.
Roanoke, Virginia 24011
(540) 857-2250
FAX (540) 857-2180

May 3, 2005

Doctor Convicted of Gun Charges

United States Attorney John L. Brownlee announced today that Deborah Barr-Hairston, age 39, of Danville, Virginia, was convicted by a federal jury of one count of conspiracy, eight counts of falsifying forms required to be kept by a licensed firearm dealer, and eight counts of providing firearms to a person who is an unlawful user of a controlled substance.

Beginning in April of 2002, and continuing through October 9, 2003, Barr-Hairston and co-defendant Thomas McArthur Shelton bought guns for Barr-Hairston's husband, Jessie Ben Hairston, who is prohibited from buying firearms because he is a convicted felon and an unlawful user of a controlled substance.

According to court testimony, Barr-Hairston, a Caswell, North Carolina physician, would buy guns for Jessie Hairston so he could trade them for drugs. Shelton bought drugs from Jessie Hairston and would also buy guns for Hairston.

Deborah Barr-Hairston faces 5-15 years in prison. No sentencing date has been set.

Jessie Ben Hairston pled guilty April 28th, 2005 to possession of a firearm by a prohibited person, conspiracy to possess a firearm while being an unlawful user, distribution of crack cocaine, and use of a firearm during a drug trafficking crime. He faces a minimum 30 years in prison.

Thomas McArthur Shelton has pled guilty to conspiracy, falsifying forms, and providing a firearm to a prohibited person.

The case was investigated by Special Agent J.D. Underwood of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, and the Danville Police Department.

Assistant United States Attorney Edward Lustig prosecuted the case.