



NEWS RELEASE

*Office of the United States Attorney
Western District of Louisiana*

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**For Immediate Release
June 30, 2005**

SULPHUR, LOUISIANA, MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO ILLEGAL FIREARMS POSSESSION

Lake Charles, Louisiana . . . **ARTHELUS PAUL TROUT**, age 37, from Sulphur, Louisiana, pled guilty yesterday to possession of a firearm by a convicted felon before United States District Judge Donald Walter, announced United States Attorney Donald W. Washington and Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF) Special Agent in Charge Mark Chait. TROUT was indicted by a federal grand jury in March 2005.

According to court documents, TROUT pawned a Marlin lever action rifle at a Lake Charles pawn shop in May 2004. It is a federal violation for a convicted felon to possess a firearm and/or ammunition.

TROUT has two prior felony convictions in Calcasieu Parish: one conviction in 1991 for possession with intent to distribute marijuana and a second conviction

in 2004 for theft of over \$500, ten counts of forgery, and burglary of a dwelling.

This case was prosecuted by the United States Attorney's Office as part of Project Safe Neighborhoods. Project Safe Neighborhoods is a nationwide program begun in 2001, and designed to reduce violence in our communities by aggressively using existing federal firearms laws. United States Attorneys, District Attorneys, Sheriffs, Police Chiefs, and state officials have created partnerships to address crimes involving firearms. Generally, any arrest involving a firearm is reviewed immediately by local, state and federal authorities to decide whether the case is best suited for prosecution under state or federal law, or a combination of both. Project Safe Neighborhoods is expected to lead to longer prison terms for violent criminals, and a significant reduction in violent crime. To date, federal prosecutions under Project Safe Neighborhoods in the Western District of Louisiana have led to the incarceration of criminals responsible for violent crimes such as homicides, aggravated assaults, robbery, car jacking, burglary, and drug trafficking.

Sentencing will be scheduled for a later date to be determined by the Court. TROUT faces a term of imprisonment of not more than 10 years, a fine of not more than \$250,000, and a term of supervised release of not less than three years.

Sentencing in federal court is determined by the discretion of federal judges

and the governing statute. United States Sentencing Guidelines established by the United States Congress and the United States Sentencing Commission may only be used as guidelines by the judge. Parole has been abolished in the federal system.

The investigation was conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Larry J. Regan.

For further information, please contact United States Attorney Donald W. Washington at 337-262-6618 or First Assistant U.S. Attorney Bill Flanagan at 318-676-3600.

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