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NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

Deputies Continue to Deal with Surge of Heroin-Related Crimes

Over the past week, the Union County Sheriff's Office has responded to several more heroin-related situations. These incidents continue to illustrate the sharp rise in heroin use locally, and the serious dangers this drug presents.

Early last Friday, an 18 year old female was transported to Novant Health Presbyterian Medical Center in Charlotte in reference to a possible heroin overdose. Once the patient was stabilized, it was determined that she had been using heroin at a residence near Weddington. While following up on this matter, Union County Sheriff's detectives searched a residence and located a quantity of heroin, numerous syringes and other items of drug paraphernalia. **Michael Patrick Conroy**, age 21, was arrested and charged with Possession with Intent to Sell or Deliver Heroin, Delivery of a Controlled Substance, Manufacture of a Controlled Substance, Possession of Drug Paraphernalia and Possession of Marijuana. He remains in the Union County Jail under a \$15,000.00 secured bond.

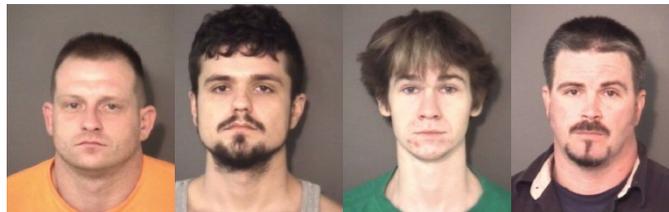
Also, last Friday morning, deputies responded to a call in Lake Park regarding a man sleeping in his car with the engine running. Upon arrival, deputies located the driver, 27 year old **Igor Volkovsky**, unconscious behind the wheel. Volkovsky still had a used syringe in his hand. He was found to have a quantity of heroin on his person, and the car was littered with syringes and other drug paraphernalia. Volkovsky was later arrested and charged with Possession of Heroin and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia.

On Tuesday, Union County Sheriff's deputies conducted a traffic stop of **Harley Clinton Helms**, age 32, of Monroe. A drug detection canine was utilized, and officers subsequently located a trafficking-level quantity of heroin in the vehicle. Helms was arrested and charged with two counts of Trafficking in Heroin, Maintaining a Vehicle to Store Controlled Substances, and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia. Helms also remains in the Union County Jail under a \$100,000.00 bond.

Yesterday, Sheriff's Deputies located a suspicious person in a parked vehicle, at a business in close vicinity to New Salem Elementary School. Upon further investigation, deputies discovered a substantial quantity of both heroin and methamphetamine in the vehicle and on the suspects' person. The sole occupant of the vehicle, **Ashley Landon Hinson** (36), of Oakboro, was arrested and charged with Trafficking in Heroin, Trafficking in Methamphetamine, Possession with Intent to Sell or Deliver Heroin and Methamphetamine within 1000 yards of a school, and Possession of Drug Paraphernalia. Hinson remains in the Union County Jail under a \$750,000.00 bond.

Sheriff Cathey has placed an increased emphasis on battling the surge of heroin cases in Union County. The Sheriff's Office has taken a "Zero Tolerance" policy in heroin-related matters, and will relentlessly pursue those involved in bringing heroin to Union County.

Sheriff's Deputies are continuing to undergo training in the use of Naloxone, also known as "Narcan," an opioid antagonist, designed to counter the negative effects of opium products. The Sheriff's Office hopes to have patrol officers equipped with the drug by early March. In addition, Sheriff Cathey plans to equip patrol cars with "sharp" containers to allow for the safe collection and disposal of used syringes. Patrol Deputies and citizens are finding these used needles on a regular basis, in public places such as parking lots and neighborhood picnic areas.



Helms Volkovsky Conroy Hinson

Point of contact for this press release is PIO Tony Underwood, 704-292-2707.

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Citizens with information concerning criminal activity are encouraged to call:

Union County Sheriff's Office at 704-283-3789

Or

Union County Crimestoppers at 704-283-5600