

US ATTORNEY'S OFFICE



SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF WEST VIRGINIA

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NEWS RELEASE

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WOOD COUNTY MAN SENTENCED TO 15 YEARS IN PRISON ON FEDERAL GUN CHARGES

Charleston, WV – A Parkersburg man was sentenced today to fifteen years in prison on two firearm violations. Chief United States District Judge Joseph R. Goodwin sentenced **MATTHEW DICKEL, 28**, to fifteen years in prison, the maximum sentence allowed by law.

On April 19, 2006, a Federal grand jury sitting in Charleston, WV, returned a four-count indictment against DICKEL charging him with two counts of making a false statement in the acquisition of a firearm, and two counts of being an unlawful user of drugs in possession of a firearm. DICKEL pled guilty in August 2006, to Counts Three and Four of the indictment, charging him with one of each offense. The counts DICKEL pled guilty to relate to his acquisition of a firearm five days prior to shooting and killing his companion in front of the couple's young child in Vienna, WV, on May 22, 2004.

At the sentencing hearing, Judge Goodwin recounted testimony from numerous witnesses from prior hearings regarding DICKEL's pattern of physical and mental abuse against the victim, threats to kill the victim with a gun, and threats to harm others who attempted to help the victim. In fashioning such a severe sentence, Judge Goodwin considered the United States Sentencing

Guidelines which called for an even harsher sentence since the Judge concluded that Dickel possessed a firearm in the premeditated and malicious killing of the victim. Judge Goodwin stated that DICKEL is a "violent and dangerous person," and his "behavior, lack of acceptance of responsibility for the murder, and lack of respect for the law is longstanding." The Judge further commented that he imposed the maximum sentence allowed because of DICKEL's violent nature and the need to protect society.

United States Attorney Charles T. Miller, "This case should send a strong message to violent criminals who commit crimes with firearms. This office will protect the public by vigorously prosecuting dangerous criminals who commit firearms offenses."

Federal law prohibits the possession of firearms and ammunition by unlawful users of controlled substances; those addicted to a controlled substances; those subject to a final protective order; those convicted of crimes of domestic violence; felons; fugitives from justice; those who have been adjudicated mentally defective or who have been committed to a mental institution; those dishonorably discharged from the armed services; and illegal aliens.

The Parkersburg Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives conducted the investigation. Assistant United States Attorneys Steven I. Loew and Lisa G. Johnston handled the prosecution.

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