

OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY
BLUE RIDGE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Three Co-Defendants Sentenced to Prison for Drug Trafficking and Distribution
State vs. Justin Carl Benson, Heather Sparrow Bird, and Terry Raymond Spriggs

September 18, 2025 – Cherokee County District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway announces that Justin Carl Benson, Heather Sparrow Bird, and Terry Raymond Spriggs have received lengthy prison sentences after entering negotiated guilty pleas to drug trafficking and related charges.

Charges stem from a Cherokee Sheriff's Office investigation that began on July 14, 2023, following a 911 call reporting suspicious activity outside a residence on Lower Scott Mill Road in Canton.

When deputies arrived, they located Bird in the bed of a 2005 Ford Ranger parked near the home of Terry Spriggs. The truck had been reported stolen several days earlier. Bird told deputies the truck belonged to Spriggs.

Deputies proceeded to Spriggs' residence to investigate further. After a brief conversation on the porch, Spriggs allowed deputies to enter the home, where drug paraphernalia was found in plain view. During a security sweep of the home, deputies discovered Benson hiding under a bed. Benson provided a false name to law enforcement.

Due to the presence of drugs and stolen property, the Cherokee Multi-Agency Narcotics Squad (CMANS) was called to the scene. CMANS obtained a search warrant and recovered a trafficking quantity of methamphetamine, along with marijuana and other controlled substances. Most of the narcotics was recovered in the master bedroom, with additional drugs found in the kitchen, living room, and the bed of the stolen truck. A Harley-Davidson motorcycle reported stolen from Alabama was also recovered in the yard.

"The facts of this case – a 911 call reporting suspicious activity, a stolen truck, and drug paraphernalia in plain view – immediately pointed to criminal activity," said Assistant District Attorney Leland McElveen, who prosecuted the case on behalf of the State. "Further investigation revealed that two defendants were trafficking methamphetamine, and all three were distributing poison into our community."

Superior Court Judge Shannon Wallace sentenced the defendants as negotiated:

- Justin Carl Benson, 29, of Canton, pled guilty on May 9, 2025, to possession of a Schedule II controlled substance (methamphetamine) with intent to distribute and giving false information to a law enforcement officer. He was sentenced as a recidivist to 10 years in prison and must serve the entire prison term without the possibility of parole.
- Heather Sparrow Bird, 49, of Canton, pled guilty on September 4, 2025, to trafficking methamphetamine, possession of a Schedule II controlled substance (oxycodone) with intent to distribute, possession of a Schedule IV controlled substance (clonazepam) with intent to distribute, possession of a Schedule IV controlled substance (alprazolam) with intent to distribute, and possession of marijuana with intent to distribute. She was sentenced to 15 years in prison with the possibility of parole.
- Terry Raymond Spriggs, 53, of Canton, pled guilty on August 11, 2025, to trafficking methamphetamine, theft by receiving stolen property, and theft by receiving property stolen in another state. He was sentenced as a recidivist to 20 years in prison and must serve his entire prison term without the possibility of parole.

“Let this outcome serve as a clear warning: drug trafficking will not be tolerated in Cherokee County,” said District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway. “Our office will continue working closely with law enforcement to dismantle these operations and hold those who endanger our community fully accountable.”

This case was investigated by the Cherokee Sheriff’s Office and the Cherokee Multi-Agency Narcotics Squad (CMANS). It was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Leland McElveen, Office of the District Attorney, Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit.

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The Office of the District Attorney for the Blue Ridge Judicial Circuit is committed to seeking justice, acting with integrity, and collaborating with partner agencies in the criminal justice system in order to protect the citizens of Cherokee County and the State of Georgia.

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