

Heroin highway leads to another homicide case

Written by BILL SCHANEN IV
Wednesday, 29 May 2013 17:58

Deadly connection between Milwaukee drug dealers and Ozaukee customers illustrated by charges in Fredonia man's death

A suspected Milwaukee drug dealer was charged last week in Ozaukee County Circuit Court with first-degree reckless homicide for allegedly selling heroin to a 26-year-old Fredonia man who authorities believe died of an overdose.

Mack E. Scott, 30, who is charged in connection with the May 9 death of 26-year-old Tyler Bares of Fredonia, is the second suspected Milwaukee heroin dealer to be charged with murder in Ozaukee County this year, and Lt. Rodney Galbraith, who heads the Ozaukee County Sheriff's Department drug unit, doesn't think it's a coincidence.

"We know that heroin dealers and opiate pill dealers that we've made cases against are looking for more Ozaukee County customers," he said. "The drug dealers know that young people here have money, and recruiting them as customers has become part of their marketing strategy."



It's a strategy that is working, and with disastrous results — an "explosion" of drug-related crime and, in the worst cases, overdose deaths, Galbraith said.

The Sheriff's Department has investigated three overdose deaths this year — a 25-year old Grafton man, a 21-year-old Town of Grafton man and Bares — resulting in the two homicide charges. The investigation of the 21-year-old's death is ongoing.

Since 2010, the department has investigated eight overdose deaths and made arrests in five of the cases, Galbraith said.

"We're talking about good kids from good suburban communities and good families who for some reason believe it's OK to use a drug like heroin," he said. "These kids end up going one of two routes. Their lives and their bodies fall apart until they get to a point where they turn to crime to support their addiction or they wind up dead."

Heroin highway leads to another homicide case

Written by BILL SCHANEN IV
Wednesday, 29 May 2013 17:58

Bares, a 2005 graduate of Ozaukee High School who earned a degree from the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee in electrical management distribution and worked at Charter Steel in Saukville, seemed to have his life together, but the investigation into his death uncovered another story.

According to authorities, Bares was at a Milwaukee Brewers game with relatives and friends the night before his death when he sent several text messages to a friend about buying drugs. In a message recovered from his phone, Bares texted his friend, "I want hard and boii," references, authorities said, to crack cocaine and heroin.

Later that night, at about 9 p.m., Bares texted someone he called Kool, who authorities believe is Scott.

Bares' text message gave authorities a lead, but to piece together his final hours, investigators turned to those who were with him.

Bares' cousin said they left the baseball game in the seventh inning and he dropped Bares off at a fast food restaurant on Silver Spring Drive in Milwaukee to meet friends. His cousin told authorities he didn't stay because he knew drugs would be involved, according to the criminal complaint.

Bares' friend told investigators that on the night of May 8, he, his girlfriend and Bares drove to West Leon Terrace and West Sheridan Avenue in Milwaukee and parked behind a Ford Explorer driven by Kool, who he later identified as Scott. He said he purchased \$250 of cocaine and \$150 of heroin from Scott, the complaint states.

Bares' friend said the group drove to Sheboygan County, smoking crack on the way to another friend's house, where they smoked more crack.

The group drove back to Ozaukee County, where a witness said she saw Bares snort two lines of heroin and smoke crack cocaine, according to the complaint.

Just after 4 p.m. on May 9, two hours before authorities discovered Bares' body, his friend sent a text message to him that read, "Hey man, u got any of that boy (heroin) left. Can I buy a line of it from u before I go to class?" the complaint states.

While searching Bares' home, authorities found a bottle of synthetic urine with a heat pack and drink insulator wrapped around it. The website of the company that sells the synthetic urine advertises it as a "premixed laboratory urine designed to protect your privacy during a urine test." It also sells hand warmers "to keep your hands, feet or synthetic urine warm and toasty."

"This is the first time we came across this," Galbraith said.

An autopsy concluded that while the final cause of death would depend on the results of a toxicology blood test, the preliminary cause was a drug overdose, according to the complaint.

Heroin highway leads to another homicide case

Written by BILL SCHANEN IV
Wednesday, 29 May 2013 17:58

In addition to homicide, Scott is charged with conspiracy to manufacture/deliver heroin and manufacture/deliver cocaine.

If convicted of all three felonies, Scott could be sentenced to a maximum 40 years in prison and 25 years of extended supervision.

During a court hearing last week, Judge Tom Wolfgram set Scott's bail at \$150,000.

Earlier this year, another suspected Milwaukee drug dealer, Joshua J. Gray, 24, was charged with first-degree reckless homicide for allegedly selling heroin to 25-year-old Riley O. Knapp of Grafton, who died of an apparent overdose on Jan. 3.

Similar to the case involving Bares, authorities tracked down a suspect in Knapp's death by following text messages to Gray, who admitted selling Knapp heroin four or five times in the weeks before his death, according to the criminal complaint.

Gray has pleaded not guilty to the homicide charge.

Ozaukee County investigators and prosecutors have pursued drug cases aggressively, using homicide charges to prosecute drug dealers involved in fatal overdose case since December 2005.

That is when Grafton resident Ben Stibbe, who was 23 at the time, and Caitlin Schuette of Cedarburg, 17 at the time, were charged with homicide in connection with the overdose death of Angela Raettig, 17, of Cedarburg.

Schuette was convicted and sentenced to two years in prison and eight years of extended supervision.

Stibbe was convicted in connection with Raettig's death as well as the overdose deaths of Lynn Smaxwill, 43; Matt Kobiske, 21; and James Helm, 47. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison and 15 years of extended supervision.

"We want to send a message — if you're going to be part of the drug problem, there are going to be serious consequences in Ozaukee County," Galbraith said.

Yet the problem continues, and it's sapping law enforcement resources,

"As the number of overdose deaths increases, the resources we have to deal with other crimes — what I call quality of life crimes — ends up being fewer," Galbraith said.

Adding to problems for authorities is the fact that drug use has sparked an increase in other crimes.

"Addiction to drugs like heroin turns into an uncontrollable monster. People's lives fall apart. They become unemployable and they can't legitimately support their habits anymore," Galbraith

Heroin highway leads to another homicide case

Written by BILL SCHANEN IV
Wednesday, 29 May 2013 17:58

said. “That’s when good people become not so good anymore. They steal from their family and friends — anything to get another fix.

“We’ve experienced an explosion of crime related to heroin and other opiate drug addiction. It’s what almost all of our crime is about in this county today.”

The problem is that while Ozaukee County officials fight the war on drugs and drug-related crime at home, it seems there is an endless supply of heroin and other drugs just next door.

“Heroin is as bad a drug as there is on earth,” Galbraith said. “It’s cheap, it’s addictive and it ruins lives. And it’s just a 20-minute drive down the highway.”

Image Information: Mack E. Scott