



NEWS RELEASE

**Close Hold Embargo until 6:00 p.m.
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U.S. MARSHALS SERVICE NATIONAL OPERATION NETS 144 DANGEROUS CRIMINALS IN SAVANNAH *Operation Violence Reduction¹² nabs 8000 dangerous criminals nationwide*

Savannah –The United States Marshals Service Southeast Regional Fugitive Task Force (SERFTF) and the United States Marshals Service Southern District of Georgia in conjunction with the Chatham County Sheriff's Office (CCSO), Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Department (SCMPD), and other SERFTF agencies carried out a sustained high impact fugitive operation that focused on Chatham County's and the city of Savannah's most violent offenders. This action was part of a six-week national fugitive apprehension initiative called Operation Violence Reduction¹². As a part of this initiative, the Deputy Attorney General of the United States designated Savannah, Georgia as one of the twelve "focus cities" of the national effort. From February 1-March 11, 2016, this apprehension action in Chatham County, Georgia and surrounding areas resulted in the arrest of 144 fugitives, including gang members, sex offenders, murder suspects, and other violent criminals that were wanted by the U. S. Marshals, SCMPD, CCSO, and other SERFTF partner agencies. In addition to the fugitives arrested, approximately 177 violent felony warrants were cleared.



Commander Keith Booker of the U. S. Marshals Southeast Regional Fugitive Task Force stated, "the U. S. Marshals Service and its local law enforcement partners applied a sustained, focused approach to identify violent criminals with outstanding felony warrants in Chatham County, Georgia, and the surrounding areas. This initiative has had a significant impact on crime in Chatham County, Georgia. This law enforcement action has removed a multitude of violent offenders from the streets of Savannah. These criminals will no longer prey upon the members of the community. The arrest results

speak for themselves, and the criminal element was put on notice that justice will be served in this community.”

Operation VR¹² in Savannah, Georgia targeted fugitives who had three or more prior felony arrests for crimes such as murder, attempted murder, robbery, aggravated assault, arson, abduction/kidnapping, weapon offenses, sexual assault, child molestation, and narcotics. In addition to taking fugitives off the streets, overall safety was enhanced with the seizure of seven firearms, \$6,085.00 dollars in U. S. currency, and 3.234 kilograms of narcotics. As a result of this enforcement action, these dangerous firearms and narcotics are no longer in circulation in the community.

During VR¹², SERFTF teams saturated the streets of Savannah in pursuit of these violent offenders. Investigative efforts to apprehend Savannah’s violent fugitives were national and local in scale. These efforts resulted in the arrests of Savannah fugitives throughout the United States and the local area. United States Marshal Stephen Smith of the Southern District of Georgia stated, “the local results of Operation VR¹² are tremendous. This joint law enforcement action has reduced the number of fugitives at large in our county. All participating agencies are to be commended on the effectiveness of this joint operation”.

Notable arrests in the Southern District of Georgia during VR¹² by SERFTF:

On February 18, 2016, **Andre Rondal Daise** was arrested for the shooting murder of Randy Hooks in his pickup truck near Reynolds and East 40th Street on Christmas Day, 2015. Daise has previous arrests for assault, burglary, firearms, narcotics, and various other charges. The investigation revealed Daise had fled to hide out with family members on St. Helena Island, South Carolina. When arrested in a trailer on St. Helena Island, Daise was with another individual wanted on drug charges who was also arrested. Execution of a search warrant on the trailer produced a shotgun, a rifle, ammunition, and narcotics.

On March 2, 2016, **Denzel Atkins** was located and arrested hiding in the attic of a duplex near Savannah State University. Atkins was wanted for Felony Murder by the Atlanta Police Department and Arson by the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office. Atkins is accused of fleeing the Atlanta area after the December 2015 murder of Elijah Wallace, then driving the getaway car to Montgomery County where he set it on fire to destroy any evidence. The investigation revealed Atkins had fled to Savannah to hide out with a close friend. When the duplex of the friend, who claimed not to have seen Atkins, was searched, Atkins was found hiding in the attic. He initially refused to come out until a K-9 unit was deployed into the attic, at which time he surrendered.

The concept behind interagency law enforcement operations such as Operation VR¹² evolved largely from regional and district task forces. Since the 1980s, the Marshals Service has combined their resources and expertise with local, state and federal agencies to find and apprehend dangerous fugitives. Operation VR¹² continued this tradition.

The United States Marshals Service Southeast Regional Fugitive Task Force is headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia with satellite offices in Savannah and Macon, Georgia. It was created in 2003 by the Presidential Threat Protection Act of 2000. Since its creation in 2003, SERFTF has arrested over 28,500 fugitives and cleared over 44,700 warrants with seizures of \$4.2 million in U. S. currency, 1,382 firearms, and 472 kilograms of narcotics. SERFTF Savannah is comprised of the U. S. Marshals Service, the Georgia Department of Corrections, the Georgia Department of Community Supervision, the Chatham County Sheriff's Office, the Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Department, the McIntosh County Sheriff's Office, the Bulloch County Sheriff's Office, and the Hampton County, S.C. Sheriff's Office.

For more information about Operation VR¹², including photographs and B-roll footage, visit www.usmarshals.gov.

Photos Link

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/usmarshals/sets/72157666028119425/>

Video Link

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/kffmgj87o0yitd0/VR12%20-%20Marshals%20B-roll.mp4?dl=0>

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