
THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
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Department of Justice

U.S. Attorney's Office

Southern District of Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, October 29, 2021

**Lead defendant in dog-fighting operation
sentenced to federal prison**

Sixty-three dogs rescued from chains in back yard

DUBLIN, GA: The operator of a dog-fighting facility and two codefendants have been sentenced in federal court, wrapping up the prosecution of a dog-fighting operation in Dodge County.

James Lampkin, a/k/a “Pookie,” 44, of Eastman, Ga., was sentenced to 46 months in prison and fined \$5,000 after pleading guilty in U.S. District Court to Conspiracy to Violate the Animal Welfare Act, said David H. Estes, Acting U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Georgia. U.S. District Judge Dudley H. Bowen Jr. also ordered Lampkin to serve three years of supervised release after completion of his prison term. There is no parole in the federal system.

Judge Bowen sentenced two of Lampkin’s co-defendants. **Joe Ford**, 33, of Elgin, S.C., was sentenced to 18 months in prison, fined \$1,500, and ordered to serve three years of supervised release upon completion of his prison sentence after he pled guilty to a related felony. **Xavier Simmons**, 34, of Sandersville, Ga., was sentenced to five years’ probation and fined \$1,000 after pleading guilty to Misprision of a Felony.

“Every defendant charged in this barbaric dog-fighting operation has now been held accountable after admitting to the charges,” said Acting U.S.

Attorney Estes. “Our vigilant law enforcement partners did outstanding work in identifying and shutting down this reprehensible activity.”

“These callous individuals were attracted to an activity which is both disturbingly cruel and illegal,” said Jason Williams, Special Agent in Charge, U.S. Department of Agriculture-Office of Inspector General. “Our agency and law enforcement partners will be relentless in our pursuit of individuals who maliciously find pleasure in harming these creatures.”

In March 2018, Georgia State Patrol troopers and Georgia Department of Natural Resources game wardens conducted traffic stops in Eastman after the Oconee (Georgia) Drug Task Force received reports of dog fights at Lampkin’s property. During those traffic stops, officers discovered a dog in one of the vehicles that appeared to have been injured while fighting. Later, while serving a search warrant at Lampkin’s residence, investigators seized 63 dogs chained in the back yard and discovered a disassembled pit and bloodied carpet where fights were held, along with equipment used to train dogs for fighting.

While the Asset Forfeiture Unit of the Southern District of Georgia U.S. Attorney’s Office initiated a civil forfeiture action, an animal rescue operation took custody of the dogs.

Three other co-defendants, **Benjamin Shinhoster** III, a/k/a “Benji,” 41, of Louisville, Ga.; **Deveon Hood**, 34, of Tennille, Ga.; and **Andre Archer**, 24, of Sandersville, Ga., previously were sentenced to prison terms after pleading guilty to related felony charges, while **Dwight McDuffie**, 44, of Eastman, Ga., was sentenced to two years of probation after pleading guilty to a misdemeanor.

The case was investigated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Office of Inspector General, and prosecuted for the United States by Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Jessica Rock with assistance from U.S. Department of Justice Environment and Natural Resources Attorney Ethan Eddy and Northern District of Georgia Assistant U.S. Attorney Theodore S. Hertzberg.

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