

**OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY**  
BLUE RIDGE JUDICIAL CIRCUIT



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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**After the largest heroin bust ever in Cherokee County,  
Woodstock man is convicted of multiple drug charges and sentenced to serve 45 years in prison  
State vs. Edward “Jay” Lionel Ball**

**March 17, 2023** – Cherokee County Acting District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway announces that on February 9, 2023, a Cherokee County jury convicted Edward “Jay” Lionel Ball, 40, of distribution of methamphetamine, distribution of heroin, trafficking heroin, manufacturing heroin, and possession of a firearm by a convicted felon.

Superior Court Judge David Cannon, Jr., sentenced Ball on March 9, 2023, to 60 years with 45 years to serve in confinement and the remainder on probation. He was sentenced as a recidivist pursuant to O.C.G.A. § 17-10-7(a) and § 17-10-7(c) and will be required to serve the entire prison portion of his sentence without parole eligibility.

Charges stem from a Cherokee Multi-Agency Narcotics Squad (CMANS) investigation initiated in response to a tip about Reginald Jerome Foster selling methamphetamine in Cherokee County.

During the investigation, CMANS agents observed Ball supplying Foster with methamphetamine and heroin in the pool parking lot in the Kingsgate subdivision in Woodstock. The drugs were later sold to an undercover agent.

On June 27, 2019, law enforcement executed a search warrant of the house Ball rented in Kingsgate. Shortly after entering the residence, CMANS agents discovered nearly a pound of heroin in a baking dish sitting on the stove, surrounded by kitchen tools and cutting agents. After determining that the level of heroin in the air of the home was hazardous, law enforcement resumed the search warrant wearing hazmat gear. The house was deemed unsafe for habitation.

“This was the single largest heroin bust ever in Cherokee County. Multiple law enforcement officers testified that they had never in their careers seen that amount of heroin at one time,” said Assistant District Attorney Rachel Clark, who prosecuted the case on behalf of the State. “As a result of this investigation, law enforcement removed a quantity of heroin to supply as many as 5,000 users, as well as several ounces of methamphetamine, from our community. Their hard work serves to make our county a safer place for everyone.”

The Georgia Bureau of Investigation determined that the heroin found in Ball’s home totaled more than 245 grams, substantially more than the 28 grams required for the highest level of trafficking charge per Georgia law.

In addition to the heroin, CMANS agents found methamphetamine, scales and baggies used for distribution, handguns, and ammunition. During the trial, the jury viewed photos and saw more than 40 exhibits of some of the items taken from the home, including drugs, cutting agents, and tools used to manufacture heroin.

A co-defendant testified that Ball was using his kitchen to “cut” the heroin, essentially adding substances to expand the product and increase profit. The same co-defendant also recounted traveling with Ball to buy and sell large amounts of drugs from and to other drug dealers in the metro Atlanta area. She also described how Ball would become physically violent with her if she ever tried to leave their partnership and how he used finances and heroin to control her.

“When drug traffickers spread their poison, they fuel the drug crisis and its deadly results on those struggling with addiction. I find it especially egregious that Mr. Ball, who himself does not use drugs, preys on those who do,” said Acting District Attorney Susan K. Treadaway. “The jury verdict and sentence in this case ensure that another drug operation has ceased, and Mr. Ball will never again sell drugs in our county.”

During the investigation and prosecution of this case, Foster, 39, and Katie Marissa Zepeta, 35, were also charged for their part in the crimes. On April 28, 2021, Foster pled guilty to selling methamphetamine, selling heroin, possession with intent to distribute methamphetamine, and other charges. On August 22, 2022, Zepeta pled guilty to trafficking heroin. Both were sentenced to 20 years, with 10 to serve in confinement. Special conditions of probation include no contact with co-defendants.

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

*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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