

PRESS RELEASE FROM
THE OFFICE OF SHANE A. TIEMAN
SCIOTO COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

February 17, 2023

**Scioto County portion of multi-state and federal prosecution
comes to a successful conclusion**

Scioto County Prosecutor Shane A. Tieman announced that on February 16, 2023 Defendant John Clifton Thomas Knotts of Pedro, Ohio, entered a plea of guilty and was sentenced by Judge Howard H. Harcha on three counts of Attempted Murder, felonies of the first degree and one count of Having a Weapon while under Disability, a felony of the third degree, arising from an incident on January 20, 2020. At a prior time, Co-Defendant, Amanda Cochran of Ironton, Ohio pled and was sentenced by Judge Harcha on three counts of Attempted Murder, felonies of the first degree and one court of Failure to Comply, a felony of the third degree.

The charges arose from an incident on January 20, 2023. A trooper with the Ohio Highway Patrol pulled the vehicle containing defendants over for a traffic violation in the Lucasville area. Upon approaching the vehicle, the trooper stopped to look at the license plate. At that point, the vehicle took off. The trooper entered his vehicle and began pursuit, a which point he was fired upon from the fleeing vehicle. The trooper radioed ahead to Highway Patrol Post 73 where another trooper parked in the median in an attempt to stop the vehicle. The vehicle continued on and fired at the second trooper. Multiple troopers began chase and the City of Portsmouth Police Department was advised that the pursuit was heading towards Portsmouth. Portsmouth Officers were successful in eliminating additional traffic on US 23 within the City and began to assist in the chase and apprehension. An attempt was made to utilize stop sticks to disable the vehicle at the viaduct into downtown Portsmouth. At that point a Portsmouth Police Officer was shot at and the fleeing car continued on, receiving some damage to its tires. The chase entered into Kentucky where additional shots were fired from the vehicle at pursuing officers. It was decided to fire into the vehicle using frangible rounds and conduct a pit maneuver to force the vehicle from the road prior to it entering the town of Southshore.

Officers were able to effectively stop the vehicle without loss of life to the occupants or others. Apprehended were the driver, Amanda Cochran and the shooter, John Clifton Thomas Knotts. Also seized were several guns and narcotics. A multi-jurisdictional coordinated investigation and prosecution commenced involving federal and state authorities. The Defendants were successfully prosecuted by the US Attorneys Office prior to being transferred to Scioto County. After completion in Scioto County, the duo will face Kentucky Charges.

Judge Harcha sentenced Defendant Amanda Cochran to an aggregate sentence of 20-23 years for her role in the incident. Judge Harcha sentenced Defendant John Clifton Thomas Knotts to 25-29 years for his role in the incident.

The State of Ohio was represented by Prosecutor Shane A. Tieman and Joseph L. Hale, Assistant Prosecuting Attorney. Attorney Luke Brazinski represented Defendant Cochran and Attorney Gene Meadows represented Defendant Knotts.

Prosecutor Tieman thanked the FBI, the Ohio Highway Patrol, Portsmouth City Police Department, the Scioto County Sheriff's Office, the Kentucky State Police, the Ashland Police Department and the Greenup County, Kentucky Sheriff's Office for their excellent work in this matter. The prosecutor also extended his appreciation to the U.S. Attorney's Office, the Boyd County (KY) Prosecutor's Office and the Greenup County (KY) Prosecutor's Office for their collaboration in these matters.

"The absolute calm professionalism of our law enforcement officers was put on display in this case, as well as the spirit of collaboration between the various jurisdictions. I am proud of the work done to reach a just result."