

Massachusetts State Police arrest four suspected motorcycle club members on firearm charges

Massachusetts State Police Troopers on Friday afternoon and evening seized six unlawfully-carried firearms and arrested four suspected members of a motorcycle club and one suspected associate, all from out-of-state.

The five people arrested are alleged members and an associate of the Outlaws Motorcycle Club and were in Brockton to attend a memorial service for a local member. The Massachusetts State Police Gang Unit and the Massachusetts State Police Troop D Community Action Team made the arrests after an investigation at and in the area of the Motel 6 on Westgate Drive.

At approximately 2 p.m. yesterday, two MSP Gang Unit Troopers observed a man, whom they had reason to suspect was a member of the Outlaws Motorcycle Club-Tennessee, at the motel and engaged him in conversation. During the interaction, the man acknowledged he was carrying a pistol. Troopers determined he did not have an active license to carry a firearm in Massachusetts or Tennessee; he was placed into custody and a Taurus 38 caliber revolver was recovered from his person. The man, identified as Matthew Miles, 41, of McMinnville, Tenn., was also found in possession of a small amount of suspected crystal methamphetamine, brass knuckles, and ammunition, and additional ammunition was recovered in his motor vehicle. Miles was charged with unlawful carrying of a loaded firearm, unlawful possession of ammunition, and possession of a Class A substance.

Troopers also learned that another club member, later

identified as Pedro Tapia, 51, of Murfreesboro, Tenn., was in a room at the motel and that another firearm belonging to Miles was present in the room. Troopers and two Brockton Police Officers made entry into the room and secured it pending receipt of a search warrant. The Troopers and Officers observed, in plain view on a nightstand, a 45 caliber handgun. Troopers also determined that Tapia, who was present in the room and is also believed to be an Outlaws-Tennessee member, was licensed to carry in Tennessee but did not have an active license to carry in Massachusetts. Tapia was charged with improper storage of a firearm.

Other MSP Gang Unit Troopers and Troopers from the MSP's Troop D Community Action Team, a troop-wide specialized patrol unit, arrived on scene to assist with further investigation. Troopers subsequently observed a man later identified as Matthew Ballingham, 43, of Waterbury, Conn., arrive at the hotel. During an interaction with Ballingham Troopers determined he was an Outlaws Motorcycle Club-Connecticut member and that he was carrying a loaded 9 mm Glock handgun with a high-capacity magazine. A query determined that he was not licensed to carry in either Connecticut or Massachusetts. Ballingham was placed into custody and charged with unlawful carrying of a loaded firearm, unlawful possession of ammunition, and possession of a large capacity feeding device.

Shortly before 8 p.m. Troopers from the Troop D Community Action Team stopped two motor vehicles in close proximity to the Motel 6. Troopers found both vehicles were occupied by suspected Outlaws members and associates. Troopers, assisted by Brockton Officers, located one firearm, a Cobra 38 caliber handgun, in the first vehicle, and two more firearms, a Smith & Wesson M&P 40 caliber Shield handgun and a Smith & Wesson M&P 9mm Shield handgun, in the other vehicle.

Following a brief investigation, the suspected club member who possessed the Cobra, identified as Edward Mahon, 61, of Cornwall, Vt., was arrested and charged with unlawful carrying

of a firearm and unlawful possession of ammunition. Additionally, a suspected club associate from the other vehicle, Margaret Cahill, 29, of Westmont, Illinois, was charged with two counts each of unlawful carrying of a loaded firearm, unlawful possession of a loaded firearm, and unlawful possession of ammunition.

A subsequent execution of a search warrant for the motel room resulted in the discovery and seizure of approximately 4 grams of crystal methamphetamine and a box of 45 caliber rounds, as well as the Springfield XD 45 caliber handgun and loaded magazine that were previously observed in plain sight when the room was secured. A knife was also recovered during the investigation.

All five defendants were transported to State Police-Middleborough for booking. All were bailed from custody and are expected to appear in Brockton District Court next week.