

# Media Release

## Yavapai County Sheriff's Office

**Scott Mascher – Sheriff**

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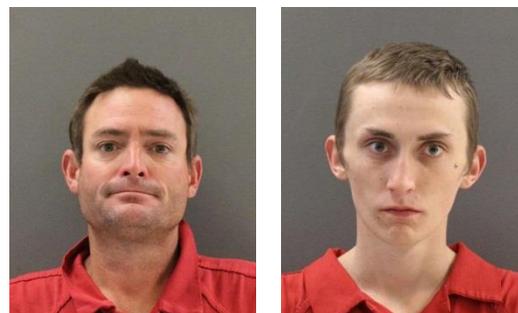


**April 15, 2015**

### *Husband brings Wife to Hospital – She is confirmed deceased from Apparent Heroin Overdose*

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PRELIMINARY INFORMATION - On April 12, 2015, at approximately 8:30 PM, YCSO deputies were dispatched to Yavapai Regional Medical Center in Prescott regarding a female who had been brought to the hospital not breathing and without any vital signs. The ER doctor confirmed her death at the time of admission, approximately 7:15PM, and she was identified as 38-year-old Jennifer Chepeus from Chino Valley. Detectives learned that Jennifer's husband, 37-year-old Jason Hawkins, was present earlier in the evening when he and Jennifer had injected heroin after drinking alcoholic beverages. Detectives learned 18-year-old Patrick "Samuel" Pruitt of Prescott had also been using heroin with the couple.



Hawkins

Pruitt

Background – Detectives determined that all three of them were in a white 2006 Chevy Tahoe towing a U-Haul flatbed trailer when the incident occurred. They purchased needles at a local department store and purchased a quantity of heroin in the Prescott or Chino Valley area. They learned Jason prepared the heroin and syringes for injection while their vehicle was parked near Outer Loop Road and Reed Road in Chino Valley. After injecting the heroin, he and Jennifer apparently passed out until Samuel woke him up. Samuel and Jason were unable to wake Jennifer and it was eventually decided to drive her to the hospital in hopes of reviving her. While Samuel drove, Jason attempted CPR and claimed Jennifer began breathing once they were in the parking lot of the hospital. Rather than seeking immediate medical attention for Jennifer, detectives determined they caused significant delay before finally taking her to the hospital's ER where her death was confirmed. Detectives found no evidence that they sought immediate aid by calling 911 or stopping at multiple Fire Stations closer to the incident.

Detectives are continuing to investigate the events leading to Jennifer's death. Detectives have conducted multiple interviews and are in the process of gathering evidence to clarify the timeline and determine any accountability those associated with Jennifer may have in her death.

Based on the investigation so far, detectives arrested and booked Hawkins at the Camp Verde Detention Center on charges including Possess/Use Narcotic Drug, Admin Narcotic Drug to Another, and Transfer/Sell Narcotic Drug. He has also been charged with violating his probation. He remains in-custody on a \$7500 bond. Pruitt was booked on a charge of Possess/Use Narcotic Drug and remains in-custody on a \$4000 bond.

*Detectives are seeking anyone with information regarding these individuals in light of Jennifer's death or who may have seen the white Chevy Tahoe with a U-Haul trailer in the area of Outer Loop Road and Reed Road, or Outer Loop Road and Williamson Valley Road, during the late afternoon/early evening of Sunday, April 12, 2015, Prescott. Detectives are also seeking the source of the heroin as part of the investigation. Those with information on this case or persons known to be involved in the sale of heroin are urged to contact Yavapai Silent Witness at 1800-932-3232 and you will remain completely anonymous. Case number is 15-013057. Direct contact with detectives on this matter is available by calling 928-771-3278.*

**Citizens can contact the Yavapai County Sheriff's Office with information or questions at 928-771-3260 or the YCSO website:**

[www.ycsoaz.gov](http://www.ycsoaz.gov)