

COLUMBIA MISSOURIAN

Grand jury documents reveal extent of alleged synthetic-weed dealing at Bocomo Bay

By [Hannah Baldwin](#)

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COLUMBIA — Guns, bars of precious metal, jewelry, gold and silver coins, and \$638,202 in cash are among the property Kevin E. Bay and John Hawkins forfeited after a federal grand jury [indicted them on charges of selling synthetic marijuana](#). Bay was also indicted on charges of money laundering.

Bay, 44, is the owner of Bocomo Bay, a head shop in Columbia. Hawkins, 61, operates the shop with Bay. The pair were indicted Oct. 2. The indictment became public Thursday after Bay and Hawkins' first court appearance.

Grand jury indictment

Together, Bay and Hawkins were indicted on 21 counts of conspiring to distribute more than \$2 million of synthetic marijuana between Nov. 1, 2008, and Oct. 2, 2013, according to a news release from the Office of the U.S. Attorney of the Western District of Missouri.

Bay was indicted on 19 counts of:

- Conspiring to launder money between March 1, 2011, and Oct. 2, 2013.
- Conducting financial transactions greater than \$10,000 with proceeds from criminal activity.
- Conducting financial transactions with proceeds from criminal activity with the intention of carrying on illegal activity.

Hawkins was charged with 13 counts, including being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Bay and Hawkins surrendered to federal authorities and were released on bond.

Civil forfeiture

Law enforcement officers seized property Bay and Hawkins had earned through their business in a civil forfeiture.

Because the property was obtained through criminal activity, it was handed over to law enforcement.

Among the items seized were:

- \$638,202 in cash.
- Four platinum bars.
- Five palladium bars.
- Seven gold bars.
- 33 silver bars.
- A counterfeit Rolex watch.
- 10 pieces of jewelry.
- 2,039 gold and silver coins from around the world.
- 76 firearms, including an Uzi sub-machine gun. Several of the guns do not have serial numbers.

According to the grand jury declaration of Jessie Durer, a special agent with the Drug Enforcement Administration, Bay said in an interview after his arrest on Aug. 29, 2011, that he stored the property in safes in his Columbia home because he did not trust banks.

On Aug. 29, 2011, the DEA subpoenaed Landmark Bank for Bocomo Bay's bank account. They found that the total income deposited into the account in 2006, the first year for which they had 12 months of records, was \$207,770.71. The last year for which they had 12 months of records was 2010. The total income deposited into Bocomo Bay's account was \$1,721,909.91. The DEA believes that Bocomo Bay began selling synthetic marijuana and laundering money in 2010.

Bocomo Bay

The DEA investigation of Bocomo Bay, at 1122 Wilkes Blvd., began in July 2011 and included undercover surveillance. The Columbia home Bay and Hawkins shared was also investigated.

"The Bocomo Bay head shop in Columbia sells paraphernalia for drug use, including pipes and smoking paraphernalia, and items for ingestion, such as "K2," 'incense' and other products," Durer said in her declaration, which described the nature of the DEA's investigation into the shop.

The shop sold products called Bocomo Bay and Bocomo Spice, which both look like marijuana and are sold in small plastic bags in measurements of about 3 grams.

The products were marketed as incense or potpourri. According to the declaration, Bocomo Bay's products were usually labeled:

- Herbal aromatherapy potpourri or incense.
- Not for human consumption.
- This product is not to be sold to anyone under the age of 19.
- This product does not contain: JWH-018, JWH-073, JWH-200, CP-47,497, HU-210, or cannabicyclohexanol.

Lab analysis confirmed that several of the shop's products did contain JWH-018 and JWH-250, synthetic compounds that act like tetrahydrocannabinol, or THC, the ingredient in marijuana that makes users high. Synthetic drugs are often called "K2" or "Spice."

Bocomo Bay received a four-out-of-five-star rating on headshopfinder.com.

The shop sells biker gear, including jackets and helmets, and motorcycle patches with slogans such as "Don't Tread on Me," "Biker Grandma" and "My Boyfriend's Wife Hates Me!" It also sells hookah tobacco, water pipes and other pipes. Signs on glass display cases containing pipes read, "Pipes, water pipes and accessories are for tobacco or novelty only. BY LAW — we cannot sell to people who use drug references or slang."

An employee at Bocomo Bay declined to comment Saturday.

Controlled substance analogues

Controlled substance analogues are synthetic versions of drugs. Synthetic marijuana is a mix of organic plant matter that has been sprayed with synthetic compounds that are chemically similar to THC. Synthetic marijuana is also known as K2 and Spice, according to Durer's declaration.

"Users of these products have reported effects similar to marijuana," Durer said in the declaration, "but many times greater to include but not limited to paranoia, panic attacks, increased heart rate and increased blood pressure."

The federal Controlled Substance Analogue Enforcement Act of 1986 renders such products illegal when they are sold for human consumption. The law requires that analogues be treated as [Schedule I](#) drugs, which the DEA considers the most dangerous.

Bocomo Bay sold K2, according to Durer's declaration.

Others involved

Nine other individuals and four businesses were also indicted by the federal grand jury.

The individuals included John Hawkins' children Matthew Ashby Hawkins, 38; Patrick Ross Hawkins, 31; and Molly Jane Carmichael, 36, of Columbia. Also indicted were: Alexander

Vladimir McMillin, 29, of Columbia; Kent Allen Holtz, 42, of Kaiser; Chadwick James Schlicht, 43, of Osage Beach; Charles Sterling Austin Jr., 61, of St. Charles; Scott Wesley Hanson, 47, of Versailles; and Thomas Lee McCormack, 28, of Jefferson City.

The businesses indicted include Dynamic Scents LLC and Order Refill LLC, which are owned by Matthew Hawkins, Patrick Hawkins, Carmichael and McMillin. Both businesses are in Columbia. Also indicted were Puff N Stuff, in Eldon, and Mozark Products LLC, in Jefferson City. The businesses were indicted on six counts, including conspiring to distribute a controlled substance.

The indictment alleges that all of the defendants were involved in distributing controlled substances.

Some of them, including McMillin, Matthew Hawkins, Patrick Hawkins and Carmichael, were also indicted on charges of conspiring to launder money.

The grand jury is confidential and the case is continuing, so Don Ledford, who is in charge of public affairs for the U.S. Attorney's Office for the Western District of Missouri, could not provide details about the defendants' alleged role in the operation.

"The indictment's not very specific about who played what role," Ledford said, though he said the defendants were distributors of the synthetic marijuana.

Supervising editor is [Zachary Matson](#).