

POLICE LINK RING TO A DOZEN KILLINGS 2 MURDER WARRANTS OUT FOR ONE MEMBER

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A fugitive described by police as a "murdering machine" is part of a local cocaine ring linked to more than a dozen Detroit area killings and the wounding of two Detroit police officers in the last year, investigators said.

John Cornelius Jenkins, 30, who police said is a major player in the ring, has been on the run from authorities since he escaped from a prison camp in November 1988. Police, who have missed on two chances to nab him, want to bring him in on two murder warrants. They said he has arranged several other killings.

"He is just . . . a murdering machine," one investigator said of **Jenkins**.

The ring is "linked to more than a dozen" killings, said Detroit Police Homicide Inspector Gerald Stewart, but he would not comment further.

Federal, state and local law enforcement officials say that **Jenkins** -- a convicted murderer with a history of violence dating to 1979 -- resumed his routine after escaping from Michigan Parole Camp near Jackson.

Investigators believe **Jenkins** belongs to an organization that runs cocaine from Cleveland to Detroit to Flint. If the supply dries up, investigators said, the ring members kill other dealers and take their drugs.

The group totes assault rifles and semiautomatic handguns for use on strangers, but even friends and members of the group are eliminated if they endanger the operation, they say.

Jenkins "would do anything to make a buck. That's one of the things that makes him dangerous," said Special Agent **John** Anthony of the Detroit FBI office.

Two men associated with the group and a woman described as a friend of **Jenkins** were killed late last year. Jimmy Livingston, 22, was found dead Dec. 16. Bennie Smith II, 24, was killed Dec. 17. Tameka Lake, 19, died the same day with two bullets in her head.

Why? Police cite the November slayings of two men during a drug transaction in a Wendy's parking lot on McNichols near I- 75, in which Livingston, Smith and Leonard Johnson were charged. Investigators said Livingston and Smith couldn't keep quiet about their role in the shootings.

"They were bragging about it," one investigator said. "That got back to an individual who said: 'They're too close. Eliminate.' "

Johnson was called to take out his partners, police said. He is in custody, charged in Smith's death and the chief suspect in the death of Livingston.

Police said Lake likely witnessed the slaying of Livingston, who was her boyfriend, so she had to be silenced. Again, Johnson is the chief suspect.

The hierarchy of the group is sketchy. Police theorize that Carl **Jenkins**, **John**'s younger brother, is the leader. They believe **John Jenkins** is the enforcer, making sure that the group's actions are carried out. Leonard Johnson is believed to be the triggerman in most of the shootings.

But "if Johnson wasn't the one to do it, then **John Jenkins** would do it himself," the investigator said.

Other people fill in the gaps, but police wouldn't say how. One man they say is affiliated with the ring, Marcus Jones, was found guilty in the April killing of a 31-year-old woman.

John Jenkins is charged with two murders. Johnson is charged with six and is a suspect in several others, police said. Carl **Jenkins** faces charges of assault with intent to murder in a shooting that left two police officers wounded last August.

Detroit police arrested Johnson and Carl **Jenkins** on Dec. 21 during a raid in the 12800 block of Trinity at the home of the late Bennie Smith. There, police got a major break in a double killing in Sumpter Township earlier in the month.

Confiscated in the raid were roomfuls of televisions, videotape recorders, stereo components, a Gucci watch, eight guns and ammunition.

Investigators discovered that some of the items had been stolen from the home of Michael Carr in the 29100 block of Elwell Road in Sumpter Township.

Investigators believe Carr became involved with the organization when he came into several thousands of dollars and sought to invest it with members of the drug ring. Police suspect that he began buying narcotics from them.

When Carl **Jenkins** was arrested on Aug. 20 in the cop shootings, Carr posted his \$100,000 bond.

But on Dec. 5, Carr and Michael Holmes, both 25, were found dead in the Sumpter Township house, each shot in the head. Carr's stereo equipment and other possessions were missing -- until police found them in Smith's house two weeks later.

That discovery gave police another theory on the cause of Smith's subsequent death Dec. 17. Carl **Jenkins** reportedly was upset that Carr had been killed and soon after, Smith -- a suspect in Carr's death-- was dead.

Auburn Hills Police may have been able to curtail the organization's actions had they known who **John Jenkins** was when he was arrested last summer. **Jenkins** and two other men were arrested June 20 after a chase on I-75. **Jenkins** had a loaded Uzi assault rifle with him.

He gave a false name, investigators said, and was released six days later on bond. His true identity wasn't known until after he was set free.

Since then, police report that they've been close to nabbing **John Jenkins** only one other time. On Dec. 22, four people were shot in a home in the 18000 block of Biltmore in Detroit. **John Jenkins**, police believe, was hit in the leg. His 2-year-old son, **John Jenkins Jr.**, was also wounded.

But before police arrived, **John Jenkins** left his wounded son and fled.

"I feel that he's an extremely dangerous person," said Stewart. If **Jenkins** were in jail, "the city streets would be a hell of a lot safer."

Anyone with information on the whereabouts of **John Cornelius Jenkins** is asked to call Detroit police at 1-800-752-1241 anytime.

CHRONOLOGY

Here is a chronology of crime that police believe involves murder fugitive **John Jenkins** and a cocaine trafficking organization.

April 4, 1989: Four men rob a home in the 5600 block of Allendale in Detroit and the occupants, Derrick Conner, 30, and Charles Douglas, 45, are shot to death. **Jenkins**, Marcus Jones and Leonard Johnson are charged with first-degree murder.

April 10: Several shots are fired at Detroit police car in front of a home in the 17100 block of MacKay. Suspects escape but abandon their vehicle, from which police recover the AK47 assault rifle used to kill Conner and Douglas.

April 11: Dale Moore, 31, is found shot to death near Sanders and Liebold, north of River Rouge on the city's west side. Police suspect two members of the **Jenkins** organization.

April 16: Gwendolyn Garner, 31, is found shot to death in a home in the 500 block of East Euclid. Investigators say the home was the last place Dale Moore was known alive. Garner's killing results in first-degree murder warrants against Jones and Johnson. Jones convicted; Johnson, who was arrested later, awaits trial.

Aug. 20: Shots are fired at Detroit police in front of home in the 14000 block of Kentucky. A chase ensues and shots are exchanged, wounding two police officers. Chase ends at the home of **John Jenkins** in Highland Park. One of the two suspects in the chase is **John Jenkins**' brother, Carl, who faces charges on assault with intent to murder.

Nov. 7: Joel Royster, 23, and Robert Flowers, 24, are shot to death in the parking lot of Wendy's at 1640 E. McNichols during a drug transaction. The vehicle the suspects use belongs to **John Jenkins** . Jimmy Livingston, Bennie Smith II and Johnson are charged with first-degree murder.

Dec. 5: Michael Carr, 25, and Michael Holmes, 25, are found shot to death in a home in Sumpter Township. Police learn Michael Carr posted a \$100,000 bond for Carl **Jenkins** after **Jenkins** ' alleged shootout with Detroit police on Aug. 20. Smith is a suspect in Carr's death.

Dec. 16: Livingston, 22, and Darius Hunter, 17, are found shot to death in a van in front of a home in the 14800 block of Kentucky. Johnson is a suspect.

Dec. 17: Smith is found shot to death in an alley at Oakman and Prairie. The investigation results in first-degree murder warrant against Johnson. Tameka Lake, 19, is found shot to death near Byron and Tuxedo in Highland Park. Lake was the girlfriend of Livingston.

Dec. 21: Officers search home on the 12800 block of Trinity, the last known address of Smith and Livingston. Carl **Jenkins** and Johnson are arrested there and three handguns are confiscated along with furniture and other items taken from the site of double homicide in Sumpter Township.

Dec. 22: Quadruple shooting occurs at home in the 18000 block of Biltmore. David Cooks, 23; Andre Clark, 25, a cousin of **John Jenkins** ; **John Jenkins** Jr., 2, and **John Jenkins** are wounded. **John Jenkins** fled before police arrived. Two handguns are confiscated, and the van believed used in the slayings of Smith, Livingston, Hunter and Lake is confiscated from the driveway.

Caption: : **JohnJenkins**

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