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IN THE SUPREME COURT

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

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State of North Dakota,	20070128)						
Plaintiff- Appellee,) Supreme Ct. No. 20070046 200 20 / 2 8						
-V8-) Burleigh County No. 08-06-K-1869						
Steven Schmalz,) Supreme Ct. No. 20070127) Morton County No. 30-06-K-0932						
Defendant-Appellant,) SA File No. M 1275-06-08 GLERK OF SUPREME COURT						
	in 9 ≈ 2007						

BRIEF OF PLAINTIFF-APPELLEE

STATE OF NORTH DAKOTA

APPEAL FROM JURY VERDICT AND JUDGMENT OF CONVICTION

Burleigh County District Court South Central Judicial District The Honorable Bruce Haskell, Presiding

Lloyd C. Suhr, Assistant, Burleigh County State's Attorney Courthouse, 514 East Thayer Avenue Bismarck, North Dakota 58501 (701) 222-6672 BAR ID No: # 05405 Attorney for Plaintiff-Appellee.

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STATEMENT OF THE ISSUES

- I. Did the district court err in denying Appellant's Motion to Suppress Evidence?
 - a. Abandoned garbage may be acquired and examined by law enforcement.
 - b. The totality of evidence presented to the magistrate supported a reasonable person to conclude that evidence of criminal activity would be found at Appellant's residence.
 - c. Alternatively, if probable cause did not exist to support the search warrant, the good faith exception to the exclusionary rule mandates against suppressing the evidence.

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STATEMENT OF THE CASE

On September 25, 2006 Steven Schmalz (Appellant) was charged by

criminal complaint with Possession of Marijuana, a Class B Misdemeanor.

(Register of Actions. 1.) Appellant moved to suppress evidence found during

the execution of a judicially issued search warrant, and had this motion denied

following a hearing before Burleigh County District Court Judge Bruce

Haskell on February 9, 2007. (Register of Actions, 26.) Appellant filed a

Conditional Guilty Plea, reserving the right to appeal from the decision of the

trial judge finding probable cause to issue a search warrant, pursuant to N.D.

R. Crim. P. 11(a)(2) on May. 3, 2007. (App. 1-2.) Appellant filed a Notice of

Appeal on May 4, 2007. (App. 7)

STATEMENT OF THE FACTS

Burleigh County Sherriff's Deputy Simon Scheett (Deputy Scheett). in his role as member of the Metro Area Narcotics Task Force, received information that Appellant, who resided at 312 Oxford Drive, Bismarck, North Dakota was involved with narcotics. (Application for Search Warrant, 3, lines 1-3.) As a result of this information Deputy Scheett began an investigation of Appellant. On May 22, 2006 Deputy Scheett and Detective Eisenmann, who was also with the Metro Area Narcotics Task Force, retrieved trash from near Appellant's residence. (Id. at p. 3, lines 3-5.) This trash had been placed on the sidewalk in front of 312 Oxford Drive. (Id. at p. 3, lines 23-24.) This is the area where trash is usually placed for trash removal. (Id. at p. 3, line 25.)

When the trash was examined, Deputy Scheett discovered a paper towel which had a dirty blackish residue. (Id. at p. 3, lines 8-10.) Using his training and experience. Deputy Scheett determined that the residue had the odor of burnt marijuana and that the paper towel appeared to have been used for cleaning marijuana paraphernalia. (Id. at p. 3, lines 8-10.) Deputy Scheett also discovered a bundle of packaging tape in the garbage. (Id. at p. 3, line 6.) With his training and experience, Deputy Scheett determined that this packaging tape contained the odor of marijuana. (Id. at p. 3, lines 6-7.)

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The garbage which Deputy Scheett had removed from 312 Oxford Drive also contained a package of cigarette cellophane. (<u>Id.</u> at p. 3, line 7.) With his training and experience Deputy Scheett identified the odor of marijuana upon this item as well. (<u>Id.</u> at p. 3, lines 7-8.) Within the garbage Deputy Scheett also discovered mail which was addressed to Appellant and listed his address as 312 Oxford Drive, Bismarck, North Dakota. (<u>Id.</u> at p. 3, lines 11-12.)

On May 23, 2006, Deputy Scheett, accompanied by Assistant Burleigh County State's Attorney Brandi Sasse-Russell, appeared before the Honorable David E. Reich, Burleigh County District Judge, in an appearance requesting a search warrant for 312 Oxford Drive, Bismarck, North Dakota. (Application for Search Warrant, p. 1.) Deputy Scheett testified under oath that he had received over 1700 hours of training in narcotics investigation and drug identification. (Id. at p. 2, lines 18-23.) Deputy Scheett then recounted that he had received information that Appellant was involved with narcotics, and detailed the trash retrieval and examination described above. (Id. at 3.) The magistrate then asked if the address for which the search warrant was being requested was a single family residence, and Deputy Scheett stated it was. (Id. at p. 4, lines 22-23.) After Deputy Scheett's sworn testimony. the magistrate found probable cause to issue a search warrant for 312 Oxford Drive, Bismarck. North Dakota, and signed the warrant. (Id. at p. 4, lines 24-25.)

<u>ARGUMENT</u>

I. Standard of Review

Upon reviewing a district court's ruling on a motion to suppress, the North Dakota Supreme Court defers to a district court's findings of fact and resolves any conflicts in testimony in favor of affirmance. State v. Graf, 2006 ND 196. ¶ 7. 721 N.W.2d 381. The North Dakota Supreme Court has recognized that the district court is in a superior position to assess the credibility of witnesses and weigh the evidence. State v. Woinarowicz, 2006 ND 179, ¶ 20, 720 N.W.2d 635. A district court's decision to deny a motion to suppress will not be reversed if there is sufficient competent evidence capable of supporting the district court's findings, and if the district court's decision is not counter to the evidence presented. Id. Questions of law are fully reviewable on appeal, and whether a finding of fact meets a legal standard is a question of law. Graf, 2006 ND at ¶ 7.

II. The district court's denial of Appellant's Suppression Motion was not erroneous.

In denying Appellant's Motion to Suppress, the district court correctly ruled that evidence discovered through the examination of Appellant's trash did not violate Appellant's Constitutional rights. The district court also properly found that the search warrant issued was supported by sufficient evidence such that it was reasonable to believe that evidence of marijuana use and marijuana paraphernalia possession would probably be located at Appellant's residence. If the district court erred in upholding the finding of

probable cause, then Defendant's Motion to Suppress must still have been denied pursuant to the good faith exception to the exclusionary rule.

a. Law enforcement legally examined Appellant's garbage.

An individual may only invoke their rights under the Fourth

Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 8, of the

North Dakota Constitution, if that person possess a subjective expectation of
privacy which society recognizes as objectively reasonable. State v. Carriere.

545 N.W.2d 773, 775 (N.D.1996). When garbage is placed in an area
accessible to the public with the purpose of abandoning it to the garbage
collector, there is no subjective expectation of privacy to that garbage which
society recognizes as objectively reasonable, and a search of that garbage does
not violate an individual's rights. State v. Herrick. 1997 ND 155, ¶ 9, 567

N.W.2d 336; State v. Rydberg, 519 N.W.2d 306, 310 (N.D.1994). The fact
that law enforcement cannot testify as to when garbage is placed out for
collection does not defeat the use of that garbage by a magistrate in finding
probable cause to issue a search warrant. State v. Johnson, 531 N.W.2d 275,
278 (N.D.1995).

In the present case, Appellant placed garbage in front of his residence on the sidewalk, an area where garbage cans are placed to be picked up for disposal. (Application for Search Warrant, p. 3, lines 23-25.) As this Court held in Herrick, Carriere, Johnson, and Rydberg, placing garbage out for collection in a public space meant that Appellant no longer maintained a subjective expectation of privacy in that garbage which the public would find

objectively reasonable. Without such a reasonable subjective expectation of privacy, Appellant may not claim that an examination of his garbage by law enforcement was improper. Nor may Appellant claim that law enforcement's lack of testimony regarding when the garbage was placed out prevents the items found from being presented at an application for a search warrant. All evidence found as a result of law enforcement collecting and examining the trash placed upon the sidewalk in front of Appellant's residence was appropriate to use in order to obtain a search warrant from a neutral magistrate.

Appellant attempts to revise existing Federal and North Dakota jurisprudence to avoid this result. Appellant would alter the current system and require articulable individualized suspicion of a crime before law enforcement can acquire and examine abandoned garbage. To support this modification, Appellant relies on two non-controlling cases, <u>Litchfield v. State</u>. 824 N.E.2d 356 (Ind. 2005), and <u>State v. A Blue in Color, 1993</u>

<u>Chevrolet Pickup (A Blue Pickup)</u>, 328 Mont. 10 (Mont. 2005).

In <u>Litchfield</u>, the Indiana Supreme Court interpreted the Indiana Constitution to require articulable individualized suspicion before a trash search. 824 N.E.2d at 360, 363-64. However, Indiana's state constitutional jurisprudence is distinctly different from North Dakota's. More than a decade ago Indiana abandoned the expectation of privacy test used to examine Fourth Amendment protections. <u>See</u>, <u>id</u>, at 359. The expectation of privacy test is the test currently used by the United States Supreme Court and the North

Dakota Supreme Court to construe Fourth Amendment protections. State v. Herrick, 1997 ND 155, ¶¶ 9-10, 567 N.W.2d 336: State v. Carriere, 545 N.W.2d 773, 775 (N.D.1996). Due to this difference as to when Constitutional rights are invoked, the holding in Litchfield did not contain an expectation of privacy analysis. Instead, the Indiana Supreme Court declared that trash searches without reasonable suspicion are "unreasonable," under Indiana's particular constitutional jurisprudence. Litchfield, 824 N.E.2d at 363-64. In reaching their decision, the Litchfield Court recognized that the trash search at issue was legal under the Fourth Amendment and the majority of state constitutions. Id. at 358-59.

The Montana Supreme Court, in the case of <u>A Blue Pickup</u>, attached Indiana's reasonableness test onto the Montana Constitution, without performing any constitutional analysis of how that attachment related to Art. II. §§10, 11 of the Montana Constitution, or the Fourth Amendment. 328 Mont. at 17-18. Instead, the Montana Supreme Court, held that to "guide the conduct of police in the future," "articulable individualized suspicion" would be required. <u>Id.</u> at 18.

In North Dakota the right to be free from unreasonable searches is found in the Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution and Article I, Section 8 of the North Dakota Constitution. These Constitutional protections are not implicated until a reasonable expectation of privacy is invaded. See, e.g., California v. Greenfield, 486 U.S. 35, 41-42 (1988); State v. Rydberg, 519 N.W.2d 306. 310 (N.D.1994). As neither federal nor North

Dakota's jurisprudence recognizes a privacy expectation in garbage placed within the public's access, there can be no constitutionally based individualized articulable suspicion requirement as there is not a Constitutionally recognized interest in the abandoned garbage. The holding in Litchfield, which recognized the legality of the garbage search under the Fourth Amendment and based it's holding of unconstitutionality entirely upon Indiana's Constitution. is therefore inapplicable. For a similar reason, the holding in A Blue Pickup, based upon Litchfield, and which failed to independently examine the constitutional issues raised in Litchfield, is also inapplicable.

b. There was sufficient evidence to support probable cause for a search warrant.

The Fourth Amendment of the United States Constitution and North Dakota Constitution Article I, Section 8, require warrants to be issued only upon a showing of probable cause. State v. Ebel, 2006 ND 212, ¶12, 723 N.W.2d 375, 380. Probable cause for a search warrant does not require the same standard of proof necessary to establish guilt at trial: instead, probable cause to search exists if it is established that certain identifiable objects are probably connected with criminal activity and are probably to be found at the present time at an identifiable place." State v. Johnson, 531 N.W.2d 275, 277 (N.D.1995). Although each piece of information may not alone be sufficient to establish probable cause and some of the information may have an innocent explanation. "probable cause is the sum total of layers of

information and the synthesis of what the police have heard, what they know, and what they observed as trained officers." State v. Damron. 1998 ND 71, ¶ 7. 575 N.W.2d 912. In reaching a finding of probable cause it is proper to take into account the inferences and deductions of a trained and experienced officer. State v. Mische, 448 N.W.2d 415, 419 (N.D.1989). So long as a substantial basis exists for a magistrate's conclusion that probable cause exists, the Court will resolve doubtful or marginal cases in favor of the magistrate's conclusion. State v. Stewart. 2006 ND 39, ¶ 6, 710 N.W.2d 403. 405.

In this case, a search warrant was issued by District Judge David E.

Reich on May 23, 2006. (Application for Search Warrant, p. 4. lines 24-25.)

The magistrate's finding of probable cause was based upon testimony presented by Burleigh County Sheriff's Deputy Simon Scheett (Deputy Scheett). (Id. at pages 1-4.) Deputy Scheett is a narcotics investigator for the Metro Area Narcotics Task Force with extensive training in law enforcement, including over 1700 hours of training in narcotics investigation and drug identification. (Id. at p. 2, lines 10-11, 18-23). Deputy Scheett received information that Appellant was involved with narcotics at his 312 Oxford Drive residence. (Id. at p. 3, lines 1-3.) Based upon this information, Deputy Scheett and Metro Area Narcotics Task Force Detective Eisenmann acquired and examined trash from Appellant's residence. (Id. at p. 3, lines 3-5.) The trash was located in front of Appellant's residence on the sidewalk. (Id. at p.

 3. lines 23-24.) Deputy Scheett stated that this was the area where garbage cans are placed for trash collection. (<u>ld.</u> at p. 3, lines 24-25.)

As a result of an examination of the trash acquired from Appellant's residence, Deputy Scheett discovered a paper towel which had a dirty blackish residue upon it. (Application for Search Warrant, p. 3, lines 8-10.) Using his training and experience in drug identification, Deputy Scheett identified an odor of burnt marijuana on this paper towel and the black residue. (Id. at p. 3, lines 10-11.) Based upon his training and experience, Deputy Scheett deduced that this paper towel had been used for cleaning marijuana paraphernalia. (Id. at p. 3, lines 8-9.) In addition, Deputy Scheett discovered cigarette cellophane in the trash which he also identified as having an odor of marijuana. (Id. at p. 3, lines 7-8.) Deputy Scheett's examination of the trash also revealed a bundled up piece of packaging tape. (Id. at p. 3, line 6.) Using his training and experience, Deputy Scheett identified the odor of marijuana on the packaging tape. (Id. at p. 3, line 7.)

During this examination, Deputy Scheett also discovered mail in the trash removed from Appellant's sidewalk. (<u>Id.</u> at p. 3, line 11.) This mail was addressed to Appellant and listed his address as 312 Oxford Drive, Bismarck. North Dakota. (<u>Id.</u> at 3, lines 11-12.)

In reaching a finding of probable cause, the magistrate determined that the paper towel identified as having a blackish residue smelling of marijuana and identified as likely being used for cleaning drug paraphernalia, the packaging tape smelling of marijuana, and the cigarette cellophane which also

 smelled of marijuana, were probably connected with marijuana use, a criminal activity. The location of the trash in which these items were found, as well as the presence of mail properly addressed to Appellant in that trash, provided the nexus between the probable criminal activity and 312 Oxford Drive, Bismarck, North Dakota.

Based upon this evidence, the magistrate determined that there was probable cause to believe that marijuana and marijuana paraphernalia were located and being used at 312 Oxford Drive, Bismarck, North Dakota, and properly issued a search warrant for that residence. This warrant was not based upon a "hunch." but upon physical evidence and the testimony and conclusions of trained and experienced law enforcement officers.

This Court has held similar evidence discovered in a garbage pull sufficient to establish probable cause. In <u>State v. Johnson</u>, this Court examined whether un-germinated marijuana seeds discovered as a result of a trash pull were a sufficient basis for probable cause to issue a search warrant. 531 N.W.2d 275, 279 (N.D.1995). This Court upheld the search warrant, and determined that although un-germinated marijuana seeds are not illegal and may have come from birdseed, their presence in the Defendant's trash was sufficient for a magistrate to determine that it was probable that marijuana would be located at the address where the trash was originally located. <u>Id.</u>

Appellant attempts to characterize <u>Johnson</u> as distinguishable because it was an appeal based solely upon stale probable cause. This is an incorrect characterization. <u>Johnson</u> challenged the search warrant based upon stale

probable cause and upon a contention that law enforcement withheld information from the issuing magistrate. 531 N.W.2d 275, 276 (N.D.1995). To decide whether the information withheld from the magistrate was sufficient to invalidate the warrant, the Court examined whether the undisclosed information would have been material to the magistrate's finding of probable cause. <u>Id.</u> at 277. It was this line of inquiry which led the Court to declare that un-germinated marijuana seeds and bank slips naming a defendant provided both a nexus to the location and a sufficient likelihood of criminal activity to support the issuance of a search warrant. Id. at 279.

In the present case, as in <u>Johnson</u>, law enforcement conducted a trash pull and discovered mail linking the trash to the location to be searched and evidence of marijuana. In the present situation the evidence of criminal activity is even stronger as the paper towel with black residue demonstrated that Appellant was likely using marijuana by burning it in a device which was then being cleaned. As drug use can be a habituating and continuing offense, <u>Johnson</u>, 531 N.W.2d at 277, this would lead a reasonable person to believe that there was more marijuana at Appellant's residence, as well as the smoking device which Appellant had taken the time to clean.

Although <u>Johnson</u> is the case most applicable to the facts of this case. this Court has held on multiple occasions that drug related items discovered in an individual's trash are sufficient to establish probable cause to issue a search warrant. <u>See, e.g., State v. Rydberg</u>, 519 N.W.2d 306 (N.D.1994) (holding that search warrant issued primarily because of cocaine residue in Rydberg's

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garbage was appropriate); State v. Erickson, 496 N.W.2d 555 (N.D.1993) (holding evidence of marijuana combined with citation and envelope in Erickson's name in the garbage supported a determination of probable cause).

The evidence discovered in the trash placed outside of Appellant's residence was sufficient for a reasonably cautious person to conclude that marijuana and marijuana paraphernalia would probably be located at 312 Oxford Drive. As such, the district court's denial of Appellant's Suppression based upon his finding that a reasonable person would come to the conclusion that a controlled substance was likely to be found in Appellant's residence was properly supported by the evidence and not in error.

c. Alternatively, if there was insufficient evidence for a finding of probable cause, Appellant's Motion to Suppress should have been denied pursuant to the good faith exception to the exclusionary rule.

Under the good faith exception to the Fourth Amendment, suppression of evidence is not the appropriate remedy if law enforcement relies on an objectively reasonable search warrant. State v. Utvick, 2004 ND 36, ¶ 26, 675 N.W.2d 387, 397. A search warrant is objectively reasonable unless; the issuing magistrate was misled by false information intentionally or negligently given by the affiant, the magistrate totally abandoned their judicial role and failed to act in a neutral and detached manner, a warrant is based upon an affidavit which is so lacking in indicia of probable cause that official belief in its existence is entirely unreasonable, or a reasonable law enforcement officer could not rely upon a facially deficient warrant. Id. The North Dakota

Constitution has not been found to provide greater protections than the Fourth Amendment which would preclude the application of the good faith exception to North Dakota's exclusionary rule. Id. at ¶ 28.

In the present case, if this Court finds that there was insufficient evidence for the issuance of the search warrant, suppression of evidence is not the appropriate remedy. The search was conducted in good faith reliance on a search warrant issued by a magistrate. There is no evidence that the warrant was obtained as a result of false information given by Deputy Scheett or through a magistrate who was not acting in a neutral and detached manner.

Nor can a warrant based upon the discovery of multiple items associated with marijuana and drug paraphernalia use be said to be totally lacking in indicia of probable cause. There has also been no allegation that the warrant was drafted in such a way as to be facially deficient for the search conducted.

The purpose of the exclusionary rule is deterring police misconduct. Utvick, 2004 ND at ¶ 26. If police conduct a search based upon a warrant stating that there is probable cause to conduct the search, and there has been no misconduct in obtaining that warrant, then the police are doing exactly what the people and laws of North Dakota want them to do. The good faith exception rule promotes the use of warrants because police know that they can use the evidence obtained with that warrant. Without the good faith exception, police will be more likely to bypass the warrant system through the use of other exceptions to the warrant clause. This action would weaken the supervision of police conduct by a neutral judiciary and threaten the

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2	protections the judiciary provides. As the good faith exception promotes
3	proper police action and the protections afforded by a neutral judiciary,
4	excluding it from North Dakota Constitutional jurisprudence would defeat the
5	purpose of the exclusionary rule and harm our legal system.
6	As the police relied on an objectively reasonable warrant, obtained
7	without misconduct, suppression is not the appropriate remedy if the issuing
8	magistrate erred in finding probable cause.
9	and the state of t
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11	CONCLUSION
12	Based upon the foregoing, the State requests that the Order Denying
13	the Motion to Suppress be affirmed in all things.
14	Dated this 25th day of July, 2007.
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16	eox CSW
17	Lloyd C. Suhr, Assistant, Burleigh County State's Attorney
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14	in a sealed envelope a true copy of the attached:							
15	Brief of Plaintiff-Appellee Affidavit of Mailing							
17	in the United States mail at Bismarck, North Dakota, postage prepaid,							
	addressed to:							
18	ATTORNEY AT LAW M PO BOX 1896 21	OR7	N KOPPY FON COUNTY STAT ECOND AVENUE N		TOR	NEY		
20	BISMARCK ND 58502-1896 M	AN	DAN, ND 58554					
21	which address is the last known address of the addressee.							
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24	Subscribed and sworn to be	tore	me this <u>40</u> day o	f July, 2	2007.			
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26	KIMBERLY S BLESS Notary Public State of North Dakota My Commission Expires February 24, 2010	В	imberly S. Bless, N urleigh County, Nor Iy Commission Exp	rth Dak	ota			