

The Virgin Islands Consortium

Police Confiscate Multiple Firearms, Arrest Three Suspects Following Report That Men Were 'Playing With Guns' at Housing Community

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From top to bottom, Lesroy Nisbett, Trevorn Simmonds and Asean Lawrence. On the right, the weapons that the VIPD confiscated as part of the operation. By. THE VIRGIN ISLANDS POLICE DEPARTMENT

ST. THOMAS — Three men are facing firearm charges after police discovered a cache of weapons in the porch of a vacant apartment.

Trevorn Simmonds age 24, Asean Lawrence age 22, Lesroy Nisbett age 20 and an unidentified minor were all arrested on Sunday, March 13. Police were dispatched to the

Paul M. Pearson Garden Community to respond to reports of multiple men playing with guns. According to court documents, upon arrival, the officers heard what sounded like gunshots and quickly proceed to the front of one of the buildings. There they were met with four masked men dressed in dark clothing holding firearms. An officer reportedly gave loud verbal commands to the men to drop their weapons but they did not comply. Instead, the four men ran up a staircase and two of them stopped along the way to point their guns at the officers.

As one of the officers raised his own service weapon and pointed it up, one of the men threw his gun, causing it to land just inches away from the officer. The men were repeatedly ordered to come down with their hands up and one of them stated “we are coming”. According to the probable cause fact sheet, one of the officers noticed movement from the upper left side of the stairwell between some plants. The four men eventually came down the stairs unmasked and with their hands up. They were then placed in the police vehicle while the officers secured the building.

During their inspection, police discovered that there were no weapons in the stairwell, but noticed a vacant apartment on the left side of the stairwell which they believed the men had entered. The fire department was called to assist the officers in gaining entry and according to the probable cause fact sheet, while searching the porch police found several firearms and ammunition in a planter. Police believed the men accessed the planter by standing on the railing and tucking the firearms through the opening.

The four men were subsequently transported to the police station where they were read their rights and placed under arrest. The minor was placed in protective custody by the Juvenile Bureau while the other three were turned over to the Bureau of Corrections after failing to pay bail in the amount of \$175,000 each.

Lawrence, Simmonds and Nisbett appeared for advisement hearings on Monday where the judge found probable cause for a slew of charges. These include first-degree assault, contributing to the delinquency of a minor, possession of illegal ammunition, possession of an unlicensed firearm and carrying or using a dangerous weapon during a crime of violence.

During the hearing judge Paula Norkaitis expressed that while everyone is innocent until proven guilty, the court was disturbed and concerned for the safety of the residents of the housing community. Bail was eventually set at \$150,000 each with provisions for the posting of 10 percent. If they are able to make bail, the men will each be placed on electronic monitoring. They have all been ordered to stay away from the vacant apartment where the weapons and ammunition were discovered.