

NEWS RELEASE

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Jury convicts woman of pet salon break-in; man convicted of safecracking

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – A woman who broke into a pet grooming salon and a man charged with safecracking were convicted at trial by the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Crimes Against Property Team during the week of August 24, 2015. Two other defendants pled guilty to property crimes. The proceedings were held in courtroom 5150 before The Honorable Eric L. Levinson, Superior Court Judge.

Melissa Barrett, 32, was tried for 1) felony breaking or entering and 2) larceny after breaking or entering. The jury found her *guilty* as charged. Judge Levinson sentenced Barrett to 9-20 months in prison. Around 11:30 p.m. on August 10, 2014, a Grateful Pets employee noticed Barrett's car in the parking lot of the pet grooming salon and store on Rozzelles Ferry Road in Charlotte. The next morning, the manager arrived at the business to find that most of the store's inventory, including dog leashes, dog clothes and a microwave, as well as Barrett's smock, were missing. The manager suspected that Barrett, a former employee who had been fired, was responsible and knew that she frequently sold items at a local flea market, so he went to the market and found Barrett selling the items she'd stolen from the store. The manager took photos of her and notified police.

Ryan Sparks, 20, was tried for 1) felony breaking or entering, 2) larceny after breaking or entering, 3) larceny of a firearm and 4) safecracking. The jury found him *guilty* of the safecracking offense and *not guilty* of the remaining charges. Judge Levinson sentenced Sparks to 6-17 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending Sparks' successful completion of 26 months of supervised probation.

The State also called Dante Heard, 27, for trial on charges of 1) felony breaking or entering and 2) larceny after breaking or entering. Upon being called for trial, Heard pled guilty as charged. He was sentenced to 7-18 months in prison.

Adrian Manigault, 17, pled guilty to breaking or entering a motor vehicle. He was sentenced to 6-17 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 22 months of supervised probation.

Another defendant charged with property crimes was called for trial but failed to appear in court. Judge Levinson issued an order for his arrest.

Note: For more information about the District Attorney's Office, visit www.charmeckda.com. For updates and other information, "like" the DA's Office on Facebook at www.facebook.com/charmeckda and follow us on Twitter: @CharMeckDA.

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