

NEWS RELEASE

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Armed robbers, sex offender convicted at trial; 7 others plead guilty

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Over the course of two weeks, the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Crimes Against Persons Team convicted three defendants at trial, as well as another seven defendants who pled guilty before their cases were called for trial. The proceedings were held November 4-15, 2013, before The Honorable Robert C. Ervin, The Honorable Lisa C. Bell and The Honorable Yvonne Mims Evans, Superior Court Judges.

Jamonte Baker, 31, was tried for 1) five counts of robbery with a dangerous weapon, 2) conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon and 3) possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. A jury found him *guilty* as charged. Judge Ervin sentenced Baker to 240-321 months in prison.

Joe Petty, Jr., 41, was tried for 1) statutory sex offense and 2) two counts of indecent liberties with a child. The jury found him *guilty* as charged. Judge Evans sentenced Petty to 195-243 months in prison. Judge Evans also ordered that Petty register as a sex offender for 30 years following his release from prison. Petty molested a girl over the course of about five years, beginning when the girl was 10 years old. The child's mother learned of the abuse in 2012 and reported the incidents to police.

Tayshawn New, 23, was tried for 1) robbery with a dangerous weapon and 2) conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon. The jury found him *guilty* as charged. Judge Bell sentenced him to 59-83 months in prison. In June 2012, New and Isiah Barnes-Johnson made arrangements to sell an iPhone to the victim for \$150. New and Barnes-Johnson met the victim at Central Piedmont Community College. When New asked to count the cash, he pulled out a handgun and told the victim to leave. Police identified New and Barnes-Johnson as suspects because the victim wrote down their vehicle's license plate number and because Barnes-Johnson was wearing an electronic monitor that showed he was at the scene of the robbery. Barnes-Johnson pled guilty in connection with this crime and another incident. See below for more information about his conviction.

The following defendants pled guilty before their cases were called for trial:

Jerry Lee Brooks, 63, pled guilty to three counts of first-degree rape. Judge Ervin sentenced him to life in prison. [Click here](#) to read more about Brooks' conviction.

Isiah Barnes-Johnson, 23, pled guilty to 1) two counts of breaking or entering, 2) two counts of larceny after breaking or entering, 3) robbery with a dangerous weapon, 4) conspiracy to

commit robbery with a dangerous weapon and 5) being a habitual breaking or entering status offender. Judge Ervin sentenced Barnes-Johnson to 91-134 months in prison.

Anthony Stith, 48, pled guilty to assault with a deadly weapon inflicting serious injury. He was sentenced to 41-64 months in prison.

Steven Morris, 28, pled guilty to 1) two counts of felony serious injury by vehicle and 2) reckless driving. He was sentenced to 16-29 months in prison.

Jerry Bennett, 56, pled guilty to discharging a weapon into occupied property. He was sentenced to 25-39 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 30 months of supervised probation. As one of the conditions of his probation, Bennett must serve 150 days in the Mecklenburg County jail.

Anthony Cuthbertson, 37, pled guilty to possession of a firearm by a convicted felon. He was sentenced to 13-25 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 30 months of supervised probation. As one of the conditions of his probation, Cuthbertson must serve 90 days in the Mecklenburg County jail.

Emilio Argueta-Fontanez, 19, pled guilty to larceny from the person. He was sentenced to 6-17 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation.

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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