

NEWS RELEASE

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DA's Crimes against Persons Team convicts 9 felons, including 3 of sex offenses

CHARLOTTE, N.C. — The Crimes against Persons Team of the Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Office tried two defendants the week of December 3, 2012 in Mecklenburg County Superior Court. The trials were held in courtroom 5370 before The Honorable Yvonne Mims Evans, Superior Court Judge, and in courtroom 5150 before The Honorable Robert C. Ervin, Superior Court Judge.

Charles Thompson, 57, was tried for robbery with a dangerous weapon. The jury returned a verdict of *guilty* to common law robbery, a lesser included offense of robbery with a dangerous weapon. Judge Ervin sentenced Thompson to 25-30 months in prison.

Jeremy McCray, 21, was tried for 1) felony larceny from the person and 2) felony larceny of goods of over \$1,000 in value. The jury returned verdicts of *guilty* on 1) felony larceny from the person and 2) misdemeanor larceny. Under the law, McCray could only be sentenced on one of the two charges. Judge Evans sentenced McCray to 5-6 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 18 months of supervised probation.

Seven defendants pled guilty before their cases were called for trial:

Junior Rice, 26, pled guilty to attempted statutory rape. The Honorable Linwood O. Foust, Superior Court Judge, sentenced Rice to 94-173 months in prison. Rice used a fake Facebook profile to pose as a 19-year-old high school student to meet the 14-year-old victim. Rice then went to the victim's residence for the purpose of engaging in sexual intercourse. The victim's mother returned home to find Rice and her daughter in Rice's vehicle. Rice fled, but he was soon identified and apprehended by Charlotte-Mecklenburg police.

Charles Tillman, 25, pled guilty to attempted second degree rape. Judge Ervin sentenced Tillman to 38-55 months in prison. Once Tillman has completed his prison term, he will be required to register as a sex offender for 30 years. Tillman's plea stems from a March 2010 incident involving the attempted rape of a woman in the presence of her daughter and granddaughter. The victim was unloading her van when Tillman, a man she had never met, approached and shoved her into the open door of the van. Tillman unzipped his jeans and began to pull down the victim's pants. When the victim tried to pull herself away from him and screamed for help, Tillman struck her twice with a closed fist and fled. Police quickly located Tillman nearby, and while Tillman initially admitted his intent to sexually assault the victim to police officers, he chose to move the case forward to trial. The victim's willingness to testify about the ordeal was instrumental in securing a plea and a prison sentence.

Juan Padilla, 38, pled guilty to second degree rape. Judge Ervin sentenced Padilla to 60-81 months in prison. Once Padilla has completed his prison term, he will be required to register as a sex offender for life and will be subject to satellite-based monitoring unless he is deported.

Antonio Harrison, 19, pled guilty to 1) two counts of robbery with a dangerous weapon, 2) conspiracy to commit robbery with a dangerous weapon, 3) breaking or entering a motor vehicle and 4) misdemeanor larceny. Judge Ervin sentenced Harrison to 51-71 months in prison.

Mason Howard, 24, pled guilty to possession of a firearm by a felon. Howard was sentenced by Judge Ervin to 13-16 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. As one of his conditions of probation, Howard must serve 90 days in the county jail.

Nelson Gomez, 29, pled guilty to possession of a firearm by a felon. Judge Evans sentenced Gomez to 12-15 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 24 months of supervised probation. As one of his conditions of probation, Gomez must serve 8 days in the county jail.

Anthony Gidderon, 26, pled guilty to assault inflicting serious injury. Judge Ervin entered a prayer for judgment continued in Gidderon's case until December 20, 2012, at which time Gidderon may be sentenced.

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