

NEWS RELEASE

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DA's Crimes Against Property Team convicts 17 defendants

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – The Mecklenburg County District Attorney's Crimes Against Property Team convicted 17 defendants during the week of July 1, 2013. The defendants entered their guilty pleas in courtroom 5350 before The Honorable Lisa C. Bell, Superior Court Judge. The convictions were for crimes that included criminal malfeasance, felony trafficking in stolen identities, felony obtaining property by false pretense, felony financial card theft, felony breaking or entering, felony larceny, felony breaking or entering a motor vehicle, felony possession of burglary tools and felony possession of stolen goods. Based on the structured sentencing laws in North Carolina, sentences ranged from probation to active prison sentences.

Among the defendants who pled guilty were:

Laronte Berry, 25, pled guilty to 1) three counts of felony breaking or entering, 2) two counts of felony larceny after breaking or entering, 3) two counts of felony possession of stolen goods and 4) being a habitual breaking or entering status offender. Berry was sentenced to 26-49 months in prison and ordered to pay \$1,685.75 in restitution to the victims. In August 2012, Berry and a co-defendant kicked in the front door of a home on Oneida Road in Charlotte, activating a home alarm. Less than two hours later, the pair broke into another home on Reames Road and stole several items, including Air Jordan shoes and a pair of camouflage shorts. Police found Berry nearby after a witness called 911 and gave a description of the suspects and their vehicle. Inside the defendants' vehicle, police found the stolen shorts, and Berry was wearing the stolen Air Jordan shoes when he was arrested. A television and a purse also found in the car were linked to a third break-in that happened the same day at a home on Nevin Road.



Laronte Berry

Jordan Forston, 24, pled guilty to 1) possession of a stolen vehicle and 2) ten counts of felony breaking or entering a motor vehicle. Forston was sentenced to 11-23 months in prison. He was also sentenced to an additional 24-57 months in prison; that sentence was suspended pending his successful completion of 36 months of supervised probation. During his probation, Forston will be required to wear an electronic monitor. Forston was also ordered to pay \$1,280 in restitution to the victims.

Note: Almost all guilty pleas entered in criminal administrative court are the result of an agreed upon plea arrangement between the State and the defendant, which is then approved by the sentencing judge. For more information about why most cases must be resolved by plea negotiation instead of jury trial, please visit the "Understanding Criminal Court" section of the DA's website at www.charmeckda.com.

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