



TANEY COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DATE: OCTOBER 27, 2011

SEVEN (7) YEARS IN PRISON FOR TAMPERING WITH FORSYTH CHURCH BUS

ADAM E. HENDERSON (d.o.b. 8-29-1979), of Reeds Spring, Missouri, was sentenced by Circuit Judge Mark Orr on Wednesday, October 26, 2011, to seven (7) years in prison for the class C felony of tampering with a motor vehicle in the first degree, and four (4) years for possession of burglar's tools, pursuant to a plea agreement with the Taney County Prosecutor's Office. Henderson had entered a guilty plea on Wednesday to the charges of tampering with a motor vehicle in the first degree and possession of burglar's tools. In a separate case, Henderson pleaded guilty to the class C felony of passing a bad check. Henderson received a concurrent seven (7) year prison sentence on the bad check case, also.

On May 25, 2011, Taney County Sheriff's deputies responded to the First Baptist Church, on Highway 76 just west of Forsyth, in reference to a report of gasoline theft. An employee of the church explained that he had smelled the strong odor of gasoline coming from the church van when he arrived at work early that morning. When he inspected the van, he noticed the gas tank had been drilled, and approximately 30 gallons of fuel was emptied from the van's tank. A review of surveillance video showed a suspect and suspect's automobile during the time of the gasoline theft. In addition, there was a glove left at the scene near the church bus.

Later that same day, deputies were serving a search warrant on State Highway BB, in Hollister, as part of a narcotics investigation. At that time, Adam E. Henderson was found by officers outside the residence being searched, where he was standing beside an automobile with a cordless drill, rubber hose, and plastic gas can at his feet. Inside the automobile was another gas can full of gasoline, along with a glove matching the one found at the scene of the crime. A review of the surveillance video from First Baptist Church confirmed that Henderson was the person drilling the hole in the gas tank of the church bus, and the automobile he was standing beside was the one at the First Baptist Church.

Tampering with a motor vehicle in the first degree is a class C felony, which carries a maximum penalty of seven (7) years in prison and/or a fine of not more than \$5,000.00. Possession of burglar's tools is a class D felony, which carries a maximum penalty of four (4) years in prison and/or a fine of not more than \$5,000.00. Passing a bad check on a non-existent account is also a class C felony. It should be noted that stealing items of a value under \$500.00 is a class A misdemeanor. Henderson was charged in the tampering case as a persistent felony offender, and he did not plead guilty to misdemeanor stealing as part of that plea agreement.

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