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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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NATHAN GARDNER FOUND GUILTY OF 2009 BRANSON HOME INVASION

Taney County Prosecuting Attorney, Jeffrey M. Merrell, announced today that NATHAN ALEXANDER GARDNER, DOB: 2/29/1992, of Branson, Missouri, was found guilty of three (3) felonies by a 7-woman, 5-man jury, in the Taney County Circuit Court. Gardner had pleaded not guilty to the charges of burglary in the first degree, assault in the first degree, and armed criminal action. The jury deliberated on the issue of Gardner's guilt for about one-hour before returning guilty verdicts on all three (3) counts, as charged. The same jury deliberated on the sentences for each of the felonies, and returned recommendations of five (5) years for burglary in the first degree, six (6) years for assault in the first degree, and three (3) years for armed criminal action. Taney County Circuit Judge Mark Orr accepted the jury's verdicts and scheduled formal sentencing for May 10, 2012.

The felony charges stemmed from a home-invasion perpetrated by Nathan Gardner, along with Mark Wayne Gandy, on July 14, 2009, in Branson. Gardner admitted to Taney County detectives that he and Gandy had dressed in camouflage and masks, sneaked through the woods, knocked on the door of a Quebec Drive home, and forced their way into the home when the door was answered. One of the two occupants of the home suffered serious injuries from being attacked and assaulted during the home-invasion.

Burglary in the first degree carries a range of punishment of five (5) years to fifteen (15) years in prison. The class B felony of assault in the first degree carries a range of punishment of five (5) years to fifteen (15) years in prison. The felony of armed criminal action stems from Gardner and his co-defendant, Mark Wayne Gandy, using a metal pipe to carry-out their crimes, and the minimum penalty for that offense is three (3) years in prison – there is no maximum sentence for armed criminal action.

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