

PRESS RELEASE

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Chaska Burglar Sentenced to Fifty-One Months in Prison

Carver County Attorney Mark Metz announced that on September 30, 2015, Carver County District Court Judge Michael Wentzell sentenced Matthew Vaught Diamond, age 24, to a prison term of 51 months for burglarizing a home in Chaska on October 30, 2104. The Carver County Attorney's Office charged Diamond, previously residing in Hastings, Minnesota, with the felony charge of Burglary of a Dwelling in the Second Degree. A jury of twelve citizens found Diamond guilty of burglary following trial on May 15, 2015.

On October 30, 2014, a homeowner on Bavaria Road reported to the Chaska Police Department that after she returned home following an errand about 12:00 p.m., she found that somebody forcefully kicked open her garage service door. Notably, the outside of the service door bore several shoeprints. The burglar then rifled through many rooms of the house, including dressers in the master bedroom. The burglar stole a number of items, including several pieces of distinctive, heirloom jewelry.

While waiting for police to arrive, the homeowner found an envelope lying on the ground, about 30 feet from her garage door. The envelope was not there when the homeowner left earlier that morning. Writing on the envelope contained the name "Savanna W." In investigating the burglary, Detective Rachel Nelson learned that a Savanna W. had pawned several pieces of stolen jewelry at Pawn Exchange in Shakopee later in the day on October 30, 2014. In a subsequent interview Savanna W. stated that Diamond had used her car the day of the burglary and later asked her to pawn the jewelry for him.

After the defendant was arrested a short time later on a non-related probation violation, police noted the tread pattern on the shoes that Diamond was wearing were consistent with the tread pattern on the kicked-in service door. Further, a subsequent search warrant on Diamond's cell phone revealed that his cell phone was "pinging" off cell phone towers near the Bavaria address at the time of the burglary. Diamond did not otherwise have any substantial contacts with Chaska.

At sentencing, Diamond's attorney requested a non-prison, probationary sentence based on Diamond's claim that he was now amendable to probation. However, in

arguing for a prison sentence, prosecutor Peter Ivy and the homeowner both noted that the psychological trauma of having one's home burglarized was even worse than the loss of the property itself. Based on these arguments, and with reference to the defendant's significant prior history score, which included prior convictions for burglary, Judge Wentzell found there was no substantial and compelling reason to depart from the presumptive sentence of the Minnesota Sentencing Guidelines, which specified a sentence of fifty-one months based on the severity of the crime and the prior criminal history score.

In addition to obtaining a conviction and sentence that best serves the community interests, County Attorney Metz recognized the diligent work of the Chaska Police Department in investigating the leads in this difficult circumstantial case.

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