



NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Purse-Snatcher Sentenced to Eight Years in Prison

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Dan Patterson, Greene County Prosecuting Attorney announced that Joseph L. Johns, 38, of Springfield, Missouri entered a guilty plea to criminal charges arising from the theft and attempted theft of purses from three elderly women at Springfield grocery stores.

Johns entered a guilty plea before the Honorable Thomas Mountjoy to three counts contained in the felony information. A jury trial in the case was scheduled to begin today. Jury selection had already begun when Johns decided to plead guilty to the charges.

Johns pled guilty to one count of attempted stealing and two counts of stealing from a person. The conduct alleged in all three counts occurred on August 5, 2010 in Springfield, Missouri.

Under the plea agreement, the defendant was sentenced to eight years in the Missouri Department of Corrections. Probation was denied pursuant to the plea agreement. At the time of these offenses, Johns was on felony probation for second degree burglary. His probation in that case was revoked as a result of the new convictions.

This case was prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorneys Emily Carlstrom and Russ Dempsey. It was investigated by the Springfield Police Department and Detective Tony Vienhage was the lead investigator assigned to the case.

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