



Department of Justice

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ORLANDO MAN WHO SHOT AT SHERIFF'S HELICOPTER SENTENCED TO PRISON

Orlando, Florida - U.S. Attorney Robert E. O'Neill announces that U.S. District Judge Gregory A. Presnell today sentenced Jason Dennis McGuire (27, of Orlando) to 30 months in federal prison for the attempted destruction of an aircraft and for possessing a firearm after being convicted of a felony. McGuire was sentenced to a consecutive sentence of 120 months for using or carrying a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence for a total sentence of twelve and one-half years.

McGuire was indicted on July 22, 2010 and found guilty of all three charges on November 12, 2010. The jury's verdict was later vacated and the Honorable Gregory A. Presnell ordered a re-trial. McGuire subsequently pled guilty to the felon in possession count on December 21, 2010 before the Honorable David A. Baker, and went to trial on the remaining charges. According to testimony presented at the re-trial, deputies from the Orange County Sheriff's Office (OCSO) responded to an early-morning 911 emergency call on March 21, 2010 of shots being fired in a residential neighborhood in Orlando, Florida. As deputies investigated the call, OCSO helicopter "Chase Three" arrived on the scene to provide aerial support. At the re-trial, deputies and neighbors testified that within moments of Chase Three's arrival, they saw McGuire shoot towards the helicopter.

McGuire took the witness stand in his re-trial and testified that he intended to commit suicide with the handgun that morning, but eventually decided not to end his life. McGuire claimed that he did not want a loaded weapon in the house, so he discharged a number of bullets into the air and a single round into a palm tree in his driveway. McGuire denied that he was shooting at Chase Three at the time. A federal jury rejected McGuire's claims and found McGuire guilty of the two remaining counts charged in the Indictment.

This is another case prosecuted as a part of the Department of Justice's "Project Safe Neighborhoods" program - a nationwide, gun-violence reduction strategy led by ATF. United States Attorney Robert E. O'Neill, along with Virginia O'Brien, Special Agent in Charge, ATF Tampa Field Division, is coordinating the Project Safe Neighborhoods effort here in the Middle District of Florida in cooperation with federal, state, and local law enforcement officials.

This case was investigated by the Orange County Sheriff's Office and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives, with forensic support provided by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement. The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Daniel W. Eckhart.