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Office of the United States Attorney Western District of Wisconsin

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Minneapolis Man Receives 26-Month Sentence for Lying to Law Enforcement

Madison, Wis. - Stephen P. Sinnott, Acting United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin, announced that William L. Dinga, 23, Minneapolis, was sentenced yesterday by U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb, to 26 months in prison for providing false information to a Special Agent of the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.

Dinga, who was living in Wisconsin Rapids at the time of the incident, and co-defendant Danielle A. Sunderlage, 25, of Friendship, Wis., were indicted by a federal grand jury sitting in Madison on March 11, 2009, with conspiracy to submit false statements in the acquisition of firearms to conceal the identity of the true purchasers. The indictment also charged Dinga and Sunderlage with making false statements to a firearms dealer and making false statements to a federal agent. Sunderlage was also separately charged in the same indictment with possessing firearms while being a marijuana user.

On April 8, 2009, Danielle Sunderlage pleaded guilty to possessing a firearm as a marijuana user in violation of federal firearms laws. According to the evidence, she possessed two .45 caliber pistols after purchasing them from Big River Sports in Adams, Wis., even though she was an admitted marijuana user. On June 18, 2009, Sunderlage was sentenced by U.S. District Judge Barbara B. Crabb to twelve months and one day in prison, to be followed by three years of supervised release.

On April 23, 2009, Dinga went to trial before a jury in Madison on three counts of having made false statements on a federal firearms purchase form when he claimed to be the actual purchaser of a total of eleven handguns on March 6, 8, and April 9, 2009, and one count of providing false information to a law enforcement officer when he stated to an ATF agent that the firearms he purchased on March 8 were for himself and that they had been stolen.

On April 28, 2009, the jury found Dinga guilty of providing false information to the federal law enforcement officer and not guilty on the other three charges. The evidence presented at the trial showed that Dinga claimed that five handguns had been stolen after he placed them in the backseat of his unlocked car, after having just picked them up from Big River Sports in Adams — a story he repeated at trial when he took the stand in his defense.

In sentencing Dinga, Judge Crabb called his testimony at trial “preposterous.” Judge Crabb specifically found that Dinga willfully lied at his trial about the theft of the handguns and the lie was material to the determination of the facts in the case. Judge Crabb sentenced Dinga to 26 months in prison without the possibility of parole. After his release from prison, he will serve three-years of supervised release.

This conviction is the result of an investigation by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. The prosecution of the case has been handled by Assistant U.S. Attorney Peter M. Jarosz.

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