



U.S. Department of Justice

United States Attorney Eastern District of Arkansas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
September 26, 2007

CONTACT: Jane W. Duke
Acting United States
Attorney
501-340-2600

Maumelle Woman Enters Plea of Guilty to Sending Racially-Charged Letter

Little Rock - Jane W. Duke, Acting United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Arkansas; William Temple, Special Agent in Charge of the Little Rock Field Office of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Sam Williams, Chief of the Maumelle Police Department, announced today that Shawn Hardin, age 42, pleaded guilty to sending a racially-motivated threat to an African-American family living near her Maumelle residence. Hardin, who had been indicted on these charges in May 2007, entered her plea today before United States District Judge James M. Moody.

During the change of plea proceeding, Assistant United States Attorney Michael Johnson introduced a letter that Hardin mailed to the victims on February 20, 2007. The handwritten letter, which was signed from "Concerned People in the Country Club," advised the victims, "This is a white neighborhood and if you have to choose to live in a white neighborhood, ACT white, not like n____s. Keep your children contained in your house. . .". Another portion of the letter stated, "Please keep to yourselves and not disturb anyone else."

Duke stated, "Sending a threatening communication to another individual because of that individual's ethnic, gender, religious, sexual or racial identity is a hateful act. Such an act inflicts terror in the heart of the recipient. Further, it is a crime that erodes the very premise of diversity and tolerance upon which our country was established." Duke added, "We are very appreciative of the Maumelle Police Department for taking this matter seriously and reaching out for federal intervention."

Hardin's ultimate sentence will be determined by Judge Moody after reviewing the United States Sentencing Guidelines. Under federal law, her sentence may include up to one year imprisonment and a fine of up to \$125,000. The sentencing date has yet to be established but will likely be within the next 45-60 days.

This investigation was conducted by the Maumelle Police Department and the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

###