Beat: News

72-Year-Old Sentenced to 15 Years in Prison for Attempted Bank Robbery

James Earl Green, Jr. of El Paso, Tx.

El Paso, Texas, 23.07.2022, 15:02 Time

USPA NEWS - A 72-year-old El Paso man was sentenced today to 15 years in federal prison for attempted bank robbery, announced U.S. Attorney for the Northern District of Texas Chad E. Meacham.

James Earl Green, Jr. was first charged in August 2020. He was convicted at trial in April and sentenced Thursday by U.S. District Judge James Wesley Hendrix.

According to evidence presented at trial, at approximately 7:40 a.m. on Sept. 24, 2019, Mr. Green accosted a First State Bank employee as she was attempting to enter the bank for opening.

Mr. Green held a handgun to the employee's head and pushed her inside the bank, where he held her for approximately 20 minutes. During that time, surveillance video caught the defendant on camera pacing back and forth with an identifiable limp.

A second bank employee arrived at 7:57 a.m., and a struggle ensued. During the melee, Mr. Green struck the first employee on the head with his handgun. He then fled on foot without obtaining any money, leaving his two duffel bags behind.

At today's sentencing hearing, one of the employees recounted that she still suffered anxiety stemming from the attack.

"Every single time I walk through the back door or my workplace, I clearly see the robber coming out of the bushes and holding his gun on me. I can still hear his voice telling me that he was going to kill me if I tried anything. I can clearly hear him say that if I tried to warn my co-worker, he would kill her and that it would be my fault," she said in a statement to the court. "Even as time has passed, this crime is still so fresh on my mind, like it happened only yesterday."

Following the incident, an anonymous tipster notified the Abilene Police Department that a gold Cadillac had been parked across the street from the bank the morning before the robbery. Law enforcement then identified the Cadillac – a four door sedan with its front right hub cap cover missing – in surveillance video pulled from the bank's vicinity. An employee of the City of Abilene narrowed down gold Cadillacs from a list of more than 11,000 to locate a matching gold Cadillac belonging to Mr. Green.

After learning that Mr. Green lived in El Paso, officers reached out to an individual there that knew him, who reviewed the bank surveillance video and noted that the robber in the video walked in a similar manner to Mr. Green, who wore a prosthetic leg. She also shared a photo of Mr. Green's Cadillac, which was gold and missing its front right hub cap cover.

Meanwhile, the Texas Department of Public Safety's Crime Lab extracted a DNA profile from the duffel bag, ran it through the FBI's Combined DNA Index System (CODIS), and found a match to a sample from Mr. Green. Additionally, a member of the FBI's Cellular Analysis Survey Team obtained historical cell phone data from Mr. Green's cell phone provider and placed Mr. Green's cell phone traveling to Abilene from El Paso days before the attempted bank robbery and returning from Abilene to El Paso immediately following the attempted robbery.

The Abilene Police Department, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Dallas and El Paso Field Offices, and the Texas Department of Public Safety's Crime Laboratory conducted the investigation. Assistant U.S. Attorneys Callie Woolam and Ryan Redd tried the case.

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Source: Department of Justice, U.S. Attorney's Office, Northern District of Texas press release July 21, 2022

Article online:
https://www.uspa24.com/bericht-21317/72-year-old-sentenced-to-15-years-in-prison-for-attempted-bank-robbery.html

Editorial office and responsibility:
V.i.S.d.P. & Sect. 6 MDStV (German Interstate Media Services Agreement): Wendy Westhoven

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Official Federal Reg. No. 7442619