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## **Three prior offenders convicted in Clay County criminal trials in past week**

LIBERTY – Three prior offenders have taken detours after being convicted of felonies in Clay County in the past week says Prosecutor Daniel White.

The latest, convicted today, was James D. Johnson. Johnson, 44, of Liberty, faces up to 15 years in prison after being convicted of receiving stolen property.

Johnson has convictions back to 1981 for stealing says White. “His priors also included a felony resisting arrest in 1995 as well as numerous stealing charges,” said the prosecutor.

In the case which ended today, Johnson was convicted of being in the possession of a trailer that belonged to an Ava, Mo., man. The case was investigated by the Missouri State Highway Patrol.

According to testimony elicited during the trial, troopers met the victim at the Pleasant Valley Quik. The owner told the trooper he had loaned the trailer to Johnson in June, 2004, and hadn't seen it again until the day of that day in late August, 2004. The owner had a friend hire Johnson to haul some hay to Springfield. Johnson picked up the hay but instead of delivering the day to Springfield, instead parked the trailer at the convenience store where police recovered it.

Clay County Circuit Court Judge A. Rex Gabbert continued Johnson's case to 9 a.m. Sept. 29 for sentencing.

“Because of his numerous convictions, Johnson faces an increased sentence,” said White. “Normally the maximum punishment for stealing would be seven years but Johnson’s recorded bumps the maximum to 15.”

Johnson joins two other offenders with prior histories who also were recently convicted after Clay County trials. Jurors Aug. 1 convicted a 49-year-old man with a prior California child sodomy in a 2005 home invasion.

Judge Janet L. Sutton ordered a pre-sentencing examination and continued the case of Michael D. Haynes to Aug. 21 for motions and possibly sentencing. Jurors convicted Haynes, who faces up to 30 years in prison, after deliberating less than an hour.

“The facts in that case were every parent’s nightmare,” said White. “A 7-year-old boy is in the house and mom is in the backyard when Haynes barges in. The frightened child hides while Haynes prowls through the residence,” said White.

White said the crime occurred July 27, 2005, at a residence in Kansas City in Clay County. Because a person – in this case, the child – was present during the crime, the offense was classified as burglary in the first degree. And, because Haynes has prior convictions, he faces a maximum of 30 years in prison instead of 15.

White said Haynes’ sodomy stemmed from a 1981 Santa Barbara County, Calif., case. In that instance, the victim was less than 14. In addition to the sodomy of a child conviction, Haynes also has convictions for offenses as diverse as car theft to sale of controlled substances said White.

Also convicted Aug. 1 was Aaron Lund who faces up to four years in prison after being convicted of driving while intoxicated. Lund, who had two prior DWIs, was convicted after a two-day jury trial

Lund, 29, of Glenaire, had two prior driving while intoxicated convictions; his first was handed down in 2000. His case was continued to Sept. 5 for post conviction motions. A tentative sentencing date is set for 10:30 a.m. Oct. 3 in Clay County Circuit Court.

“Pleading guilty to two prior DWIs is all it takes to elevate subsequent drunk driving charges to a felony level,” said White. “Because of these prior offenses, Lund faces a maximum of four years in prison instead of six months in jail.”

White said that in 2005, 94 percent of all persons charged with DWI offenses in Clay County pleaded or were found guilty of the charge.

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