



*Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona*

PRESS RELEASE

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ARMED CAREER CRIMINAL SENTENCED TO 12 AND ½ YEARS IN PRISON USED FIREARM TO PISTOL WHIP GIRLFRIEND'S SON

PHOENIX, ARIZONA –Paul K. Charlton, U.S. Attorney for the District of Arizona, and Virginia O'Brien, Special Agent in Charge for the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives, announced that on September 22, 2003, EDDIE LEE HATCH, D.O.B. March 15, 1960, of Mesa, Arizona, was sentenced to 12 and ½ years in prison for Armed Career Criminal in Possession of a Firearm in violation of 18 U.S.C. §§ 922(g)(1) and 924(e), by United States District Frederick J. Martone, in Phoenix, Arizona.

On July 1, 2003, Hatch entered a guilty plea to the charge. In the course of his guilty plea, Hatch admitted the following facts. On the date of the offense, March 12, 2001, Hatch had previously been convicted of ten (10) felony offenses, specifically:

1. Unlawful Flight from a Pursuing Law Enforcement Vehicle, Case Number 4316, in the Superior Court of Arizona, Mohave County, on November 26, 1979;
2. Second Degree Escape, Case Number 4367, in the Superior Court of Arizona, Mohave County, on November 26, 1979;
3. Robbery (4 Counts), Case Number CR-120040, in the Superior Court of Arizona, Maricopa County, on October 27, 1981;
4. Attempted Escape, Second Degree, Case Number CR-123970-A, in the Superior Court of Arizona, Maricopa County, on July 2, 1982;

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5. Escape From a Correctional Facility, Case Number CR-89-00015, in the Superior Court of Arizona, Cochise County, on July 7, 1989; and

6. Attempted Armed Robbery (2 Counts), Case Number CR-92-04831, in the Superior Court of Arizona, Maricopa County, on August 27, 1992,

and he knowingly possessed a Bryco Arms, Model 38, .380 caliber, semi-automatic pistol.

Additionally, Hatch admitted he had been in a residence in Mesa, Arizona, along with his girlfriend at the time of the offense. While the two were in the residence, his girlfriend's son came by and started to talk to his mother. An altercation started between Hatch and the son. Hatch pulled his handgun from his fanny pack, pointed it at the son and then hit him over the head with it. The son was seriously injured and went to a nearby residence. The assault was reported to the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office. At the scene of the assault, Hatch was found hiding on a porch off of a bedroom surrounded by debris by two deputy sheriffs. Hatch was then directed by the deputies to enter the bedroom and handcuffed. Hatch soon advised the deputies that he had a gun in his fanny pack. The deputies removed the fanny pack, secured the gun and found the fanny pack also contained marijuana packaged in multiple plastic bags. Once handcuffed, the defendant cooperated fully with the deputies.

This prosecution is another success for the District of Arizona's Project Safe Neighborhood's firearms enforcement program. The effectiveness of Project Safe Neighborhoods in Arizona is based on the ability of federal, state, and local agencies to cooperate in a unified offensive that is led by United States Attorney Paul K. Charlton. In this case, the federal government was able to obtain sentence of 12 and ½ years for felon/Armed Career Criminal in possession of a firearm to be served concurrently with the remaining term of Hatch's 3 and ½ year State of Arizona prison sentence for the aggravated assault of his girlfriend's son. Project Safe Neighborhoods encourages federal and local prosecutors to simultaneously seek the maximum penalties available in cases where the defendants have a long history of violence in their communities. Mr. Charlton stated "taking a 10 time felon like Hatch off the streets for 12 and ½ years is

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one of the core priorities of Project Safe Neighborhoods.”

The investigation in this case was conducted by the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives and Maricopa County Sheriff's Office.

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