



June 16, 2004

Providence man admits gun offense

Nicholas Tetreault, of Providence, has pleaded guilty to being a felon in possession of a firearm, admitting that he tossed a handgun out of a car during a high-speed police chase that followed a drive-by shooting in January. Providence Police arrested Tetreault after he crashed his car into a telephone pole on Huntington Avenue.

The Office of the United States Attorney announced the guilty plea, which Tetreault entered yesterday before Senior U.S. District Court Judge Ronald R. Lagueux in U.S. District Court, Providence. Tetreault, 20, of 224 Sackett Street, is detained at the ACI pending sentencing, which is scheduled for September 10.

At the plea hearing, Assistant U.S. Attorney Lee H. Vilker said that, shortly after 11:00 PM on January 14, Providence Police received a report of gunshots being fired at 29 Ocean Street. A man there said that a man in a small white vehicle had fired shots into his car and garage.

Soon afterward, a patrol officer saw a white car traveling fast on Potters Avenue. The driver ignored the officer's attempt to pull the car over and led police on a high-speed chase. During the chase, officers saw the driver toss a handgun out the car's window and recovered the gun, a .22 caliber revolver. The car crashed into a telephone pole at the corner of Huntington Avenue and Homestead Street and police arrested the driver, identified as Tetreault.

Tetreault later admitted to police officers that he had fired shots at his cousin's car because he had heard that his cousin had threatened to kill him and, "I wanted to kill him first."

Tetreault pleaded guilty to one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm, a charge that the U.S. Attorney brought in an information, which was filed after Tetreault waived his right to have the case reviewed by a grand jury.

Tetreault has a prior felony conviction for second degree arson.

The statutory maximum penalty for being a felon in possession of a firearm is ten years in federal prison and a \$250,000 fine. Federal sentencing is determined on the basis of guidelines that rely on such factors as the specific nature of an offense and a defendant's criminal background, if any.

Providence Police and the **Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives** investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney Vilker is prosecuting it.

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