

NEWS RELEASE

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POPLAR BLUFF MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO UNLAWFUL POSSESSION OF A FIREARM AND AMMUNITION

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A Poplar Bluff, Missouri man pled guilty today to charges of unlawful possession of a firearm and ammunition, announced United States Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway.

EDWARD M. McRAY, age 33, pled guilty to one felony count of being a previously convicted felon in possession of a firearm, and to one felony count of being a previously convicted felon in possession of ammunition. He appeared before United States District Judge E. Richard Webber.

On June 21, 2007, McRay pawned a Smith & Wesson, Model 439, 9mm caliber, semi-automatic pistol at Alan Faraone Pawn Shop and Bail Bonds, located in Poplar Bluff, Missouri. During the transaction, McRay stated to the clerk that he "sort of had a gun collection" of about

four or five more firearms at his residence. McRay received \$100 for pawning the aforementioned 9mm pistol. The clerk gave McRay a pawn ticket and instructed McRay to retain the pawn ticket until McRay redeemed the pistol. The agreement reflecting the pawn arrangement for the pistol indicated that McRay had 90 days to redeem the pawn ticket and regain the pistol. As part of the pawn transaction, McRay provided the Pawn Shop with his residence address on Spring Street in Poplar Bluff, Missouri.

On July 26, 2007, law enforcement officers executed a federal search warrant authorizing them to search the residence of McRay for firearms, ammunition and related items. During the execution of the search warrant, officers discovered over 400 rounds of Federal Cartridge Company .22 caliber ammunition located in a black duffel bag in the basement of McRay's residence.

Due to McRay's previous felony conviction for "Distribution of Controlled Substances" in Stoddard County, Missouri, he is prohibited from possessing firearms and ammunition. McRay now faces a maximum punishment of ten years imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Sentencing has been set for January 28, 2008.

Hanaway praised the Poplar Bluff Police Department and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives for their work on the case. Assistant United States Attorney Paul W. Hahn handled the prosecution for the Government.