

NEWS RELEASE



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CARUTHERSVILLE MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO FEDERAL FIREARMS CHARGES

January 15, 2008

A Caruthersville, Missouri man pled guilty today for unlawful possession of a firearm, announced United States Attorney Catherine L. Hanaway.

MARCEDUS LEECH, age 27, pled guilty to one felony count of being a previously convicted felon in possession of a firearm. He appeared before United States District Judge Henry E. Autrey.

On August 28, 2007, law enforcement officers were interviewing a man in Pemiscot County, Missouri, who admitted that he had stolen two handguns from his grandfather's house in Pemiscot County, Missouri, and traded them to Marcedus Leech for some crack cocaine. The man agreed to try to purchase the firearms back from Mr. Leech. The man contacted Mr. Leech and arranged for the purchase of one of the stolen handguns back from Mr. Leech. The man also arranged for the purchase of another quantity of crack cocaine from Mr. Leech. At the appointed time and place, Mr. Leech appeared and sold the handgun and a quantity of crack cocaine to the man for \$225. The man turned the firearm and the crack cocaine over to the officers

immediately after the sale. The handgun was described as a Smith & Wesson, .357 magnum caliber revolver.

Due to Leech's previous felony convictions, he is prohibited from possessing firearms. He now faces a maximum sentence of life imprisonment and a \$250,000 fine. Sentencing has been set for April 15, 2008.

Hanaway praised the Bootheel Drug Task Force, the Pemiscot County Sheriff's Department, the Hayti Police Department, and the *Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives.* Assistant United States Attorney Keith D. Sorrell handled the prosecution for the Government.