



NEWS RELEASE

GREENE COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY

DAN PATTERSON

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1010 Boonville
Springfield, MO 65802

05/26/2016

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TWO MEN CHARGED IN WEEKEND CRIME SPREE

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that Joshua J. Vanzant, 20, of Springfield and Harry Russell Wilson, IV, 19 of Springfield have been charged today in connection with a crime spree last Saturday, May 21, 2016.

Vanzant has been charged with robbery in the first degree and armed criminal action for the purse snatching on the parking lot of the Home Depot in South Springfield, three counts of tampering in the first degree involving three different stolen vehicles, and burglary in the first degree of the home of one of the vehicle owners. Vanzant was on probation and a prior and persistent felony offender at the time of the offenses, and his bond has been set at \$150,000. Wilson has been charged with robbery in the first degree, armed criminal action and burglary in the first degree for the same incidents. Wilson has other pending charges and his bond has been set at \$100,000.

Mr. Patterson cautions that the charges contained in the felony complaint for each defendant are merely allegations and that the defendants are presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in court. Mr. Patterson also stated that the case remains under investigation by the Springfield Police Department with regard to other potential charges and suspects. He also stated that he wanted thank the Springfield Police Department, the Greene County Sheriff's Department, the Missouri State Highway Patrol, and First Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Jonathan Barker for their work and coordination that made these arrests and charges possible.

Copies of the felony complaint and probable statement filed in this case are attached to this release. The Missouri Supreme Court ethics rules prohibit comments

Subject: Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Press Release, State v.
Vanzant, 1631-CR03865

on the facts or investigation of this case beyond those contained in the felony complaint and probable cause statement that are part of the public record.

This case is being prosecuted by First Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Jonathan Barker. It is being investigated by the Springfield Police Dept. and Detective Jason Bohannon is the lead investigator assigned to the case.

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SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

FELONY PROBABLE CAUSE STATEMENT



Date: 05/25/2016 Case #: SPD160521020528

I, JASON BOHANNON, knowing that false statements on this form are punishable by law state as follows:

1. I have probable cause to believe that JOSHUA J VANZANT, White/Male, DOB 04/04/1996, committed one or more criminal offenses.
2. The following crime(s) happened on 2016/05/21 19:13 - 2016/05/21 19:54 at 2232 S JEFFERSON AVE in Springfield, Greene County, Missouri.
3. The facts supporting this belief are as follows:

On 05/21/2016 at approximately 1646 hours, a stolen black 2011 Ford F150 crashed at 2232 S. Jefferson. The stolen vehicle belonging to Stacy Mitchell had been stolen from Greene County on 05/18/2016 from her residence at 2861 S. Quail Creek Ave in Springfield Mo. Witness Bryan Veregge reported he was driving south on Jefferson Ave when he observed the Ford F150 run into the curb and stop. He reported he observed three occupants flee the vehicle and run behind 2232 S. Jefferson.

Officers Wright and Adamson later processed Mitchell's stolen vehicle and located a plastic bag containing paperwork from the Greene County Court with Joshua Vanzant's name on it and as well a copy of Vanzant's Social Security Card, Birth Certificate, and photo ID. Also in the vehicle was a receipt from Loftis Pawn issued on 05/21/2016 at 1418 hours. The receipt was for a nail gun sold by Joshua Vanzant.

Det. Thorn contacted Loftis Pawn Shop and was shown surveillance video of the sale made by Vanzant. The video showed Mitchell's stolen Ford F-150 quad cab truck arrive at the location. Vanzant is captured on video exiting the driver's door. Vanzant is also shown inside the business pawning a nail gun. A white male believed to be Harry Wilson is observed exiting the front passenger door of the vehicle. Wilson is observed wearing a black shirt and flat billed cap.

On 05/21/2016 at approximately 1710 hours, approximately 25 minutes after Mitchell's stolen vehicle was abandoned at 2232 S. Jefferson, a separate call for service was made regarding a 1999 blue Buick Lesabre with MO license plate KK1S6B; which had just been stolen from 2303 S. Roanoke (one block away). Victim, Janice Cameron, reported she had parked the vehicle in her carport and was inside her residence at the time of the theft. She reported she had placed her car keys on a hook which was located inside the threshold of the door coming into her residence from the carport. She reported she heard what she believed was a vehicle scrapping against pavement. Cameron reported she looked outside and observed her 1999 Blue Buick Lesabre missing from her driveway. Cameron stated the suspect would have entered her home to retrieve the keys.

On 05/21/2016 at approximately 1731 hours, approximately 20 minutes after Cameron's vehicle was stolen from 2303 S. Roanoke, officers were dispatched to Home Depot at 2104 E. Independence regarding a robbery. Diane Homan reported she was walking in the parking lot, approaching her vehicle, when a four-door passenger vehicle drove by and a male who was hanging out of the passenger window, grabbed her purse. Homan stated the vehicle was in continuous motion when the male grabbed her purse. She stated that she was knocked to the ground and drug a short distance, which was caused by the motion of the vehicle. Homan stated that she either let go of her purse or the strap broke and she then stopped being dragged. The purse contained her cell phone, Apple iPad, her driver's license, wallet, and credit and debit cards. Homan received minor injuries consistent with being drug a short distance.

Witness Kevin McCall reported he was westbound through the same aisle where the robbery occurred. McCall stated as he turned down the aisle he observed the suspect vehicle traveling straight at him at a high rate of speed. McCall advised he stopped as the vehicle nearly struck him. He stated the suspect vehicle hopped onto a concrete curb to avoid colliding with him before proceeding around US Cellular just east of Home Depot. McCall then stated the suspect vehicle drove westbound on Independence at a high rate of speed. McCall described the suspect vehicle as a dark blue or silver 90's model Buick Lesabre. He stated it was occupied by three occupants and described the driver as a white male and possibly wearing a gray shirt but was not positive about his clothing. McCall advised he saw the driver very well as he passed. He further stated there were three total occupants. The vehicle with Missouri license KK1S6B had been reported stolen by Cameron a short time before the robbery.

Homan's purse contained her iPhone 5S which was set up with a "find my iPhone" application. The application can be activated to track a stolen iPhone using cellular and wireless internet connections. Homan activated the application and discovered her phone was in the area of Kearney and Robberson. Officer D Dees responded to the area of Kearney/Robberson and located Cameron's blue Buick Lesabre unoccupied at Doling Park located at 301 E Talmage. Several items which had been in Homan's purse were located inside the unoccupied stolen vehicle.

At Doling Park, a third vehicle was reported stolen on 05/21/2016 at approximately 1913 hours. Jay Powers stated he left his vehicle parked near the lake in the park. Powers informed officers he left the keys in the vehicle and when he came back to the location of the vehicle it was gone. His vehicle was reported as a 2001 maroon Chrysler Concord with Missouri license plate HJ2T9S.

On 05/21/2016 Sgt. Dewitt was southbound on Grant approaching Nichols when he observed a maroon Chrysler Concord traveling northbound on Grant with four occupants. The vehicle was displaying plate HJ2T9S which had just been reported stolen. Sgt. Dewitt followed the vehicle to Grant and Commercial where he waiting to stop the vehicle until additional back-up units arrived in the area to assist with the felony stop. The vehicle pulled into the Sonic lot located at 635 W Commercial and Sgt Dewitt followed them. The driver continued around the building to go through the Sonic drive-thru. Sgt Dewitt observed the suspect vehicle had a white vehicle in front of it. Sgt. Dewitt activated his lights and siren in an attempt to stop the vehicle. Sgt Dewitt noticed the driver of the Chrysler Concord looked through his side mirror at him. The driver then quickly accelerated but was partially blocked by the white vehicle in front of him. The suspect vehicle then rammed a 2006 White Chevrolet Impala in the front quarter panel as he pulled out of the lot in order to get it moved out of his way. Impala was being driven at the time and occupied by Rachel Bedwell. The suspect vehicle left at a high rate of speed after striking Bedwell's vehicle.

Bedwell reported that she only carried liability insurance for the vehicle and that the damage exceeded \$1000.00.

Officers pursued after the vehicle which was traveling northbound on Grant at high speed. Sgt. Dewitt reported as he passed through the green light at Norton he observed the suspect vehicle had its brake lights on and was stopped in the middle of Grant about 400 yards north of Norton. Sgt. Dewitt then observed three subjects exit the vehicle and start to go towards a wooded area to the east. The vehicle then continued to flee north on Grant.

The three persons who exited the vehicle were detained in handcuffs and identified as Harry Wilson, Thomas Smith, and Ashley Langels. Sgt. Dewitt had observed Wilson exit the front passenger side and Smith and Langels exit the rear seats. Thomas Smith made statements to Sgt. Dewitt that he and Langels were dating and had only been in the vehicle for approximately 15 minutes. He identified Vanzant as the driver and stated he had been picked up at the Kum & Go at 529 S. Grant a short time before the encounter with Sgt. Dewitt.

The stolen Chrysler Concorde was later located near Farm Road 151 and Farm Road 84 by the Greene County Sheriff's Office. A K9 track was attempted to locate the driver of the stolen car. During the track, deputies located a hat and boot which were believed to have been left by the suspect during flight. The vehicle was damaged during the collision with the white vehicle while fleeing Sgt. Dewitt. It is believed that the hat belongs to Wilson.

While booking Wilson into the jail, Officer Brasser inventoried his possessions per jail policy. In his wallet, Officer Brasser located a Regions bank debit card belonging to Jay Powers (who is the owner of the stolen vehicle), a Walgreens Prescription Savings card, and a black Global Cash Card.

I was assigned the follow up investigation for this report on 05-22-16

Langels interview

In a post Miranda Interview, Langels stated that she and her boyfriend Thomas met "Josh" at Downtown Market at approximately 1830 hours. Ashley later clarified that the male that picked them up was Josh Vanzant who also goes by "Red." She stated that they got into a red four door vehicle. Langels stated that a male she identified as Harry, who also goes by "Russ" was in the front passenger side seat. She told me that they two said they had been together all day. Langels stated Vanzant was going to give them a ride to the Kum and Go and 529 S. Grant but she decided to go to Sonic. She stated that drove northbound on Grant toward Commercial. While driving she stated a police officer started following them. She stated that Vanzant noticed the officer but acted as if nothing was wrong. Langels stated that Vanzant began to panic and he and "Russ" were talking back and forth. Langels stated that Vanzant accelerates the vehicle and strikes a car that was in front of them in the parking lot. She stated that Vanzant drove the vehicle northbound on Grant. She stated she and Smith were yelling at him to stop the vehicle and let them out. She stated that when Vanzant had gotten far enough ahead of the officer he stopped and allowed her, Smith and Russ to exit the vehicle. She stated that Vanzant accelerated quickly and almost struck her leg and he continued to flee from the officer. She stated that the officer then stopped and detained each of them. Langels told me that she was told by Vanzant that the vehicle belonged to his unidentified girlfriend. Langels stated that she noted that Vanzant was in possession of the keys for the vehicle

and therefore didn't suspect the vehicle was stolen. Langels estimated that she and Smith were in the vehicle for 15 minutes. Langels stated that Harry uses 738 S. Campbell as his address which is where Smith lives.

Smith interview

In a post Miranda interview, Thomas Smith gave the following account of the incident that led to his arrest. Thomas stated that he awoke at about 1230 hours. He stated at that time, Russ was already at the apartment. Thomas told me that he doesn't really know Russ and that he is his mother's friend. Thomas told me that he did not know if Russ was at the apartment all day. He stated that because of medication he takes he slept off and on during the day. Thomas stated that Josh arrived at the apartment and was there for approximately 10 minutes when Thomas asked him to give them a ride to the store. Thomas stated they left the apartment and got into a red Chrysler that was parked in the parking lot of the apartment. Smith stated that he did not know Josh to have a vehicle so he asked if the car was stolen. Josh told Thomas that he had borrowed the vehicle from an unidentified friend. Thomas stated that based on the fact that Josh had the keys he believed the vehicle was not stolen. Thomas stated that they decided to go to Sonic located at Grant and Commercial. Thomas told me that after pulling into the parking lot, a police officer pulled in behind them. Smith stated that the officer initiated the overhead lights and Josh fled the scene. Smith stated Josh pulled out of the parking lot and struck a white car that had been in front of them. They then continued northbound on Grant. He stated that Josh ran a red light at Kearney and then dropped them off north of Norton Road. Thomas stated that Josh almost struck Langels when he drove off. Thomas denied having any knowledge of a robbery involving Josh and Russ. Thomas did not have an accurate time that they left the apartment but stated they were only in the car for approximately 20 minutes.

Wilson interview

In a post Miranda interview Harry Wilson gave the following account for the incident that ended with his arrest. Wilson indicated to me that he also goes by Russ. Wilson stated that he was and the two people he was staying with were at the apartment with a male he knew as "Red." Wilson stated that everyone got hungry so they decided to have "Red" drive them to Sonic. Wilson asked "Red" if he had a car to which he stated he did. They walked outside and prior to entering the vehicle, Wilson stated he asked "Red" if the car was "legit." Wilson stated he asked the question because he is out on bond. He stated "Red" reassured him the car was not stolen. Wilson described the vehicle as a red four door car. He stated that on the way to Sonic, "Red" begins mumbling under his breathe. Wilson stated he observed that a patrol car had pulled in behind them. He stated that without warning, "Red" accelerated the vehicle and fled from the scene. He stated the he along with Smith and Langels were yelling at "Red" to let them out. He stated that "Red" finally stopped long enough for them to get out before he continued northbound with the vehicle.

Wilson stated that he had been staying with Smith's mother, Catherine Smith, at the apartment, later found to be 738 S. Campbell #14. Wilson stated that Catherine had bailed him out of jail and he has been staying with them since that time. He stated that he is under their house rules to insure he doesn't get into any trouble. Wilson stated that he was at the apartment Friday at midnight until about 1900 hours on Saturday. Wilson stated that he has only known Josh for approximately 4 days and had never observed him driving anything else.

I asked Wilson if he knew how Josh had come into possession of the vehicle. He stated he did not know anything about the vehicle and that he had keys for it. I advised him the vehicle had been stolen from Doling Park. I asked Wilson if he knew Jay Powers who is the owner of the vehicle, to which he stated he did not. I then state that officer had found Powers' debit card in his wallet. Wilson told me that Josh asked him to hold this for a minute. Vanzant handed Wilson several items including the credit card. Wilson stated he was already holding his cigarettes, sunglasses and lighter so he just put it on top of his wallet. I asked him if he looked at the card to see the name on it. He stated it was none of his business to look at other peoples stuff. I pressed the issued and asked Wilson if he knew the card was stolen. He stuttered and stated, "It made since to me. But...I'm done talking now. I ended the interview at this time.

Vanzant was identified as the suspect driver of Power's stolen Concorde and as a suspect in the burglary of Cameron's residence and the robbery of Homan's purse. On 05/22/2016, Greene County Deputies were dispatched to 4713 North Farm Road 151 regarding a check person call. Off duty Missouri State Highway Patrol Officer Daniel Banasick reported he had assisted Greene County Deputies the night before and reported he believed he had located the driver of the suspect vehicle. Greene County Deputy Dustin Kendrick arrived and contacted Banasick who was speaking with a male who was "extremely dirty, missing both shoes, and appeared extremely fatigued." He admitted his identification as Joshua Vanzant.

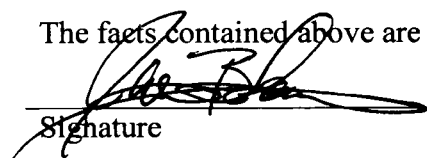
Vanzant was in possession of a large backpack with several items in it. On 05-25-16, I applied for a search warrant for the backpack. The warrant was signed by Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Jonathan Barker. The warrant was granted and signed by the Honorable Judge David Jones. I then traveled to the Greene County Sheriff Department's Property Unit where employee Amber Jones released the backpack and its contents to me.

A search of the backpack yielded the following items of note:

- Brown wallet belonging to Joshua J. Vanzant
- Buckle card in the name of Stacy Mitchell
- 1 red folder containing Stacy Mitchell's marriage license and birth certificate
- One set of car keys to an unknown make vehicle

Based on the continuous chain of events, it is believed that Vanzant and Wilson were the main participants in all the above mentioned incidents.

The facts contained above are true.


Signature

1304

DSN

Officer

Title



SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT

FELONY PROBABLE CAUSE STATEMENT



Date: 05/25/2016 Case #: SPD160521020528

I, JASON BOHANNON, knowing that false statements on this form are punishable by law state as follows:

1. I have probable cause to believe that HARRY RUSSELL WILSON, White/Male, DOB 08/26/1996, committed one or more criminal offenses.
2. The following crime(s) happened on 2016/05/21 19:13 - 2016/05/21 19:54 at 2232 S JEFFERSON AVE in Springfield, Greene County, Missouri.
3. The facts supporting this belief are as follows:

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Officers Wright and Adamson later processed Mitchell's stolen vehicle and located a plastic bag containing paperwork from the Greene County Court with Joshua Vanzant's name on it and as well a copy of Vanzant's Social Security Card, Birth Certificate, and photo ID. Also in the vehicle was a receipt from Loftis Pawn issued on 05/21/2016 at 1418 hours. The receipt was for a nail gun sold by Joshua Vanzant.

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05/25/2016 3:42:43

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The facts contained above are true.

Signature

1304

DSN

Officer

Title