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FIRST GLANCE

Jury: Woman should receive four-year term

By BOB WATSON
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A Callaway County jury recommended a four-year prison term for a Kansas City woman convicted of trying to steal cookware from Dillard's.

A second woman, Trudy Poole, 38, also of Kansas City, still faces a May 6 trial in Cole County on the attempted theft charge.

Bill Tackett, an assistant Cole County prosecutor, said Saturday the jury returned its verdict and recommended sentence about 6 p.m. Friday, after deliberating for about an hour.

Tackett said the jury convicted Martha Brawley, 39, in the case, which was heard in Fulton on a change of venue.

"The crime is attempted stealing by deceit," Tackett explained. "It is a Class D felony that has a maximum of five years in prison or a minimum of one day in the county jail, or a fine."

The state presented evidence that Ms. Brawley and Ms. Poole, "attempted to take a 10-piece cookware set, worth \$440, off the display floor and then represent that she had already bought it and she was returning it."

The attempted theft occurred April 24 at the Dillard's store in Jefferson City.

Tackett said the women had a sales receipt that seemed to indicate the cookware had been previously purchased. They apparently used the same ploy in Dillard's, Sears and J.C. Penney stores around the state, he said.

"They had various files set up and each store had its own file," Tackett said.

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☆ Woman

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The files were found in the trunk of the car the women were in when stopped after the Dillard's attempt.

Jurors hearing the case in Judge Gene Hamilton's court "saw the file system" during the presentation of the state's case, Tackett said.

Officials don't know whether Ms. Brawley and Ms. Poole had successfully gotten money from other stores using the same file system, he said.