

MALL PURSE-SNATCHING GETS MAN 4-YEAR TERM

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A spring day stalking shoppers at the Treasure Coast Square mall, one that put a 70-year-old purse-snatching victim in the hospital, cost a Port St. Lucie teenager four years in prison Thursday.

Former St. Lucie West Centennial High School senior Vincent K. Davis choked back sobs in a Martin County courtroom as Senior Judge John Fennelly sentenced the 19-year-old to four years in a youthful offender prison followed by two years probation. In exchange, Davis pleaded no contest to aggravated battery on an elderly person with great harm and robbery. He could have faced 30 years in adult prison.

Assistant State Attorney Vicki Nichols described the brutal assault on Ann Palmer and her husband, Vincent, on April 19 in which the elderly woman was dragged to the ground as she clutched her purse. Vincent Palmer broke an elbow trying to rescue his wife, according to court records.

"She's still having medical problems as a result of this," Nichols said. "She's still very, very afraid."

The Palmers did not attend the sentencing. They are "back up North," but asked Nichols not to name the state because they fear retribution, Nichols said.

Ann Palmer agreed to a lighter sentence for Davis, who was an accomplice, Nichols said.

The elderly woman is mostly afraid of 19-year-old Darryll Taylor, also of Port St. Lucie, who committed the actual assault.

"This was a very serious crime and four years is a very good resolution, although I know he does not relish going to prison," said Davis' attorney, **Lance Richard**.

The two robbers split \$600 in cash and then discarded the purse in a nearby Wal-Mart parking lot not knowing that it contained \$20,000 in jewelry, which was recovered. Taylor told investigators he spent his take on gold dental work and marijuana.

Davis said he bet his on a basketball game.

Taylor, who pleaded guilty to similar charges last month, faces a much harsher penalty when he is scheduled to be sentenced next month, Nichols said.

She declined to say how much prison time she will recommend.

"The victim said this ruined their golden years," Nichols said.

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