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Niagara Falls Review

Minor sentenced for trafficking major drugs

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Local News -

ST. CATHARINES – Even the drug dealers are getting younger.

A 17-year-old male young offender who was caught with a wallet full of cash and a tobacco tin full of drugs has been sentenced to 90 days of open custody.

The accused, who cannot be named because of his age, pleaded guilty Wednesday in the Ontario Court of Justice in St. Catharines to trafficking in cocaine and assaulting police while resisting arrest.

Federal Crown prosecutor Gordon McNab said the offences took place Oct. 11, after police pulled over a vehicle on Drummond Road near Lundy's Lane. The vehicle was stopped because a large amount of smoke had spewed from its tailpipe. The police officer noted a smell of marijuana coming from the vehicle and the driver said he had no licence or insurance because he just purchased the vehicle.

The accused placed his hands inside the pockets of his sweatshirt and refused to take them out when ordered by police. There was a struggle with police and the youth broke away and tried to flee the scene.

After the accused was apprehended, police recovered a tobacco tin that had eight small plastic bags containing cocaine and \$630 in cash. Police also found a debt list, some magic mushrooms, some marijuana and an additional \$420 in cash.

The seized cocaine was valued at \$750; there was \$650 in marijuana and \$100 in magic mushrooms.

The Crown asked for a six-month sentence, part of which was to be served in secure custody and the remainder in open custody.

Defence lawyer Charlie Ryall suggested a three month sentence, noting a six-month sentence would have been equivalent to what an adult would have received for a similar offence.

Under the new Youth Justice Act, young offenders are usually kept out of jail unless they commit certain types of violent offences.

Judge Lacavera sentenced the accused, who turned 18 on Valentine's Day, to 90 days of open custody followed by 18 months of probation.

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