Alleged boat bandit busted in Martin County

Mauricio La Plante
Treasure Coast Newspapers
USA TODAY NETWORK – FLORIDA

MARTIN COUNTY – A dumped diet root beer can and a finger print match helped lead to the arrest of a man accused of stealing a boat and other items from residences along the waterways, according to court records.

Cory Pethybridge, 31, of Okeechobee, was arrested Monday on several felony charges including grand theft, burglary of an occupied structure and burglary of a conveyance after a Martin County Sheriff's Office investigation.

In August 2020, deputies received reports of a stolen boat near a dock on the St. Lucie River, according to court records.

The records also show deputies received reports of a burglary at the Riverland mobile home park in the 3500 block of South Kanner Highway.

Investigators noted the stolen boat was docked at a property ½-mile north of the mobile home park.

Based on security footage they received, investigators said they suspect Pethybridge stole the boat and entered the dock of a property in the Riverland mobile home park.

Investigators said after he entered the dock, Pethybridge is suspected of taking away the ignition key from a Riverland resident's boat.

Pethybridge

He proceeded to steal power tools from the property's laundry room, while people were sleeping in the home, according to the records.

Investigators said they later found a diet A&W root beer can and a cigarette lighter on the ground that they suspect were dropped by Pethybridge.

Investigators said they suspected Pethybridge was responsible after his fingerprints stored in a crime database matched those on the can.

Pethybridge also is reported to have entered another dock with the stolen boat in Palm City and swiped a fusion radio system from a docked vessel, according to the records.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission later found the stolen boat in Okeechobee County, about 4.3 miles from Pethybridge's last known residence.

The person whose boat was stolen, said the engine, center console and steering wheel were stripped from the boat and said several other items were taken, investigators said.

According to the records, the man said the cost to replace everything stolen would be $5,000 to $6,000.

Sheriff's deputies placed Pethybridge in custody at the Martin County Jail on a $81,000 bond, according to a jail official.

Justices back easing media owner limits

Court finds FCC's 2017 rules update reasonable

Mark Sherman
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON – The Supreme Court on Thursday unanimously upheld federal regulators' decision to ease ownership limits on local media, rejecting a claim that the change would hurt minority and female ownership.

The court said the Federal Communications Commission acted reasonably in 2017 when it modified rules that predated the internet.

The old rules prohibited a single entity from owning a radio or TV station and a daily newspaper in the same media market. They also limited how many radio and TV stations one company could own in a single market and restricted the number of TV stations a company could operate in one media market.

"The FCC considered the record evidence on competition, localism, viewpoint diversity, and minority and female ownership, and reasonably concluded that the three ownership rules no longer serve the public interest," Justice Brett Kavanaugh wrote for the court.

The decision comes as newspaper and broadcasting industries say they need the changes to deal with growing competition from the internet and cable companies.

The FCC adopted the changes on a party-line, 3-2 vote, with three Republican-appointed commissioners in the majority. The dissenting Democratic appointees and other critics said the changes would encourage consolidation and hurt diversity.

Republicans have long sought changes to the media-ownership rules. The FCC in 2017, then-run by a Republican chairman, decided that since the internet has so changed media, allowing more consolidation in newspapers and broadcasters would be good for consumers.

The FCC now has a Democratic chairwoman who dissented from the 2017 order. But it is not yet fully staffed to let it take on controversial measures.

The FCC "reasonably concluded that the ... rules no longer serve the public interest," Associate Justice Brett Kavanaugh wrote.
WIN MCNAMEE/POOL PHOTO VIA AP, FILE

The FCC did not reply to a request for comment Thursday.

Advocacy groups that oppose the growing consolidation of the industry called on the FCC, the Biden administration and Congress to develop new rules to encourage local, diverse ownership.

"I wouldn't be surprised if this decision opens the floodgates to more consolidation for media conglomerates. But that doesn't mean the FCC has to approve every merger that comes knocking on its door," said Yosef Getachew, Media & Democracy Program Director for Common Cause.

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Judith Ann Just
Attorney, P.A.

Office: 772-236-9005
Fax: 772-236-8040

www.judithjust.com
Email: judithjust01@hotmail.com

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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARINGS

The Martin County Local Planning Agency will conduct a public hearing on April 15, 2021, beginning at 7:00 P.M., or as soon thereafter as the item may be heard, to review the following item.

The Board of County Commissioners of Martin County will conduct a public hearing on April 27, 2021 beginning at 9:00 A.M., or as soon thereafter as the item may be heard, to review the following item:

AN ORDINANCE OF MARTIN COUNTY, FLORIDA, AMENDING DIVISION 2, STANDARD ZONING DISTRICTS, ARTICLE 3, ZONING DISTRICTS, LAND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, MARTIN COUNTY CODE, PROVIDING FOR APPLICABILITY, CONFLICTING PROVISIONS, SEVERABILITY, FILING WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, CODIFICATION, AND AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

All interested persons are invited to attend and be heard. The meeting will be held in the Commission Chambers on the first floor of the Martin County Administrative Center, 2401 S.E. Monterey Road, Stuart, Florida. Written comments may be mailed to: Paul Schilling, Director, Martin County Growth Management Department, 2401 S.E. Monterey Road, Stuart, Florida 34996. Copies of the items will be available from the Growth Management Department. For more information, contact Peter Walden, Principal Planner, Growth Management Department, at (772) 219-4923.

Persons with disabilities who need an accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding are entitled, at no cost, to the provision of certain assistance. This does not include transportation to and from the meeting. Please contact the Office of the ADA Coordinator at (772) 320-3131, or the Office of the County Administrator at (772) 288-5400, or in writing to 2401 SE Monterey Road, Stuart, FL, 34996, no later than three days before the hearing date. Persons using a TTY device, please call 711 Florida Relay Services.

If any person decides to appeal any decision made with respect to any matter considered at the meetings or hearings of any board, committee, agency, council, or advisory group, that person will need a record of the proceedings and, for such purpose, may need to insure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record should include the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.

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