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Summit man found guilty for role in armed robbery

A Union County jury returned a guilty verdict Tuesday afternoon against a Summit man charged with armed robbery for threatening a gas station attendant at knifepoint three years ago, acting Prosecutor Lyndsay V. Ruotolo and Summit Police Chief Andrew Bartolotti jointly announced.

The jury deliberated for less than a day before convicting 47-year-old Patrick Vermilyea of first-degree armed robbery, third-degree possession of a weapon for unlawful purpose, and fourth-degree theft of movable property. The verdict came after three days of trial testimony before Union County Superior Court Judge Lisa Miralles Walsh and was tried by Assistant Prosecutors Estrella Lopez and Frank L. Valdinoto.

At trial, it was revealed that in the early morning hours of June 5, 2018, Vermilyea, armed with a knife, threatened an employee before entering the attendant's booth of the Shell gas station on River Road in Summit. Once inside the booth, Vermilyea stole money and cigarettes before fleeing the scene. Vermilyea was later stopped in his vehicle by members of the Millburn Police Department on Interstate 78 and taken into custody.

"This guilty verdict is the culmination of dedicated, hard work by prosecutors and investigators to successfully bring Union County's first criminal case to trial following the COVID-19 pandemic," said Ruotolo.

The investigation was led by the Summit Police Department and assisted by members of the Millburn Police Department.

Sentencing in this case is scheduled to take place on September 23, when, due to the defendant's previous armed robbery convictions, he faces a term of life in prison without the possibility of parole.