
Man who robbed Mahaffey photographer accepts guilty plea

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Michael J. Irby Jr., 27, of Altoona, who is accused of robbing a photographer at gunpoint for taking pictures of his girlfriend, accepted a plea agreement.

Irby was scheduled to go on trial for numerous charges against him in relation to the incident.

“I figured I was going to die”

He accepted an open plea but it isn't known if he pleaded guilty to all of the charges.

Clearfield County District Attorney William A. Shaw Jr. was not immediately available for comment.

According to a previous article in *The Progress*, the victim operates an online women's fashion magazine and has his own private photography business.

Irby's girlfriend, Sara A. Wolfe, 23, of Altoona had modeled for the victim for several years when she asked him if he would do a photo shoot of her. On May 29, after Wolfe signed all of the necessary releases, he conducted the photo shoot of Wolfe that included some nude photographs.

On June 13, 2016 at approximately 5:30 a.m., the victim was at home in Bell Township when Irby came to the door and said to him, “I want that computer and that hard drive,” and pushed himself inside the building. Once inside, he pulled a black handgun from his pocket and pointed it at the victim. Irby said he was going to shoot the victim in his own home if he didn't give him the computer and the laptop with Wolfe's pictures.

“I figured I was going to die,” the victim told police.

The victim said he never met Irby before but said he believed it was Wolfe's boyfriend. He said he knew Wolfe's boyfriend was named Mike and was African-American.

The victim said he gave Irby his laptop computer and his external hard drive. Irby then demanded the camera and his cell phone, and he gave those to him as well. Irby then left the victim's house — but before he did, he said if the victim ever took pictures of Wolfe again he would kill him.

The victim said the laptop computer was worth about \$1,000, the external hard drive about \$200 and the camera about \$600. However, he said the laptop computer and the hard drive contained all of the information needed for the magazine and said it was worth about \$25,000. Because of the robbery, he said he

couldn't publish the magazine the next month.

The stolen items were never recovered.

Irby is incarcerated in the Clearfield County Jail in lieu of \$50,000 monetary bail.

Wolfe was also charged in the case. She accepted a guilty plea but has not yet been sentenced.
