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## City & Region

### POLICE & COURTS

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>One of 5 in firebombing gets 20 years in prison

A Hartman Avenue man was sentenced Friday to 20 years in prison for the Nov. 28 firebombing of a two-story Shaffer Village home that endangered seven people.

Anthony Hammonds, 19, is the second of five suspects in the case to be sentenced, after he pleaded guilty to first-degree assault. He told Judge Shirley Troutman he was sorry for his role in the firebombing, which occurred about 4 in the morning.

Buffalo firefighters saved the lives of two women and five children in the attack at the West Lane address. Authorities believe the firebombers were targeting a man who did not live at that address. On Aug. 8, Troutman sentenced Anthony Bass, 29, of Lockport to 10 years in prison on his guilty plea to a charge of second-degree firebombing. Bass made the Molotov cocktail used in the attack.

Luis Valentin, 29, of Lawn Avenue, and Anthony Sturniolo, 30, of Fredonia, still face sentencing on pleas. Another man, who has yet to be identified by county arson investigators, faces trial as the ringleader of the attack, authorities said. All three remain in jail.

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>Firing gun outside bar to cost man eight years

A Leroy Avenue man was sentenced Friday to eight years in prison for firing a gun outside a crowded downtown nightclub.

Darien Laing, 22, who has been jailed since a jury on Aug. 17 found him guilty on felony weapons charges for the incident outside the Town Ballroom, did not comment during the sentencing before State Supreme Court Justice Russell P. Buscaglia.

Prosecutor Brian K. Parker said Laing had been ejected from the Main Street bar about 3:30 a.m. Jan. 1 and was arguing with security guards and standing in an alley next to the nightclub when he pulled out a .22-caliber pistol and fired a single shot near the guards.

After one of the security guards fired a single warning shot and Laing angrily refused to drop his weapon, Buffalo Police Officers Joseph Gramaglia and Joseph Ruggiero arrived and quickly arrested Laing and seized his handgun, Parker said.

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>Jury exonerates man in Chippewa St. knifing

A Kenmore man was found not guilty Friday of stabbing a Chippewa Street bar patron during a street fight over rap music last Dec. 30.

The verdict came after a five-day jury trial before Erie County Judge Shirley Troutman. The jury deliberated about 35 minutes before finding Michael Ibbett, 22, of Coventry Road, not guilty of first-degree assault and weapons possession charges that could have landed him behind bars for up to 25 years.

Tuesday, Alejandro Gonzalez, 22, of Angola, said Ibbett stabbed him in the back as about a dozen people fought outside the Area 42 bar about 3:30 a.m.

However, defense attorney Paul Gordon Dell contended Gonzalez was likely the victim of "friendly fire," likely stabbed by a relative. Gonzalez, who lost a kidney, did not identify Ibbett as his assailant until police showed him a photo array of suspects several weeks after the fight.

Ibbett, who remains jailed pending his Nov. 7 sentencing by Troutman on a probation violation charge stemming from the case, did not testify.

Dell also called five alibi witnesses who testified that the only person they saw with a knife during the melee was a relative of Gonzalez.