



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

LEE'S SUMMIT WOMAN INTERRUPTS TRIAL BY PLEADING GUILTY TO DEFRAUDING EMPLOYER

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced that a Lee's Summit woman, during the second day of a federal trial for defrauding her former employer, interrupted the proceedings by pleading guilty today.

Rhonda D. Brewer, 47, of Lee's Summit, Mo., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Fernando J. Gaitan, Jr., this afternoon to two counts of mail fraud and two counts of possessing and uttering a forged security.

By pleading guilty, **Brewer** admitted that she liquidated the investment accounts of Dr. Grosvenor Roberts, for whom she had worked more than 25 years as a housekeeper, without his knowledge or authorization. Those accounts included 3,720 shares of Bell Atlantic Corporation stock and 2,140 shares of Lucent Technologies, Inc., stock, Graves said, which were liquidated in seven separate transactions from April 1999 through July 2000.

After receiving the checks by mail from these stock liquidations, Graves explained, **Brewer** forged Roberts' endorsement and deposited these checks into his accounts, then wrote and forged checks for deposit to her own bank account totaling \$354,122.

Brewer had gained the confidence of Roberts and had keys and access to his home, Graves said. Because Roberts was in poor health, Graves added, he relied on **Brewer** for assistance in handling his checkbook and other financial papers.

Under the terms of her plea agreement, **Brewer** must immediately cease all employment for services (whether housekeeping, care providing or otherwise) for all retired, elderly or disabled persons, unless and until approved by the United States Probation Office.

As a result of today's plea agreement, **Brewer** could be subject to a sentence of up to 30 years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$1 million, as well as an order to pay restitution. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled upon the completion of a presentence report. The sentence will be determined according to the United States Sentencing Guidelines.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney Sheryle L. Jeans. The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Internal Revenue Service.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow