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PRESS RELEASE
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MELODY WHITTEMORE CONVICTED OF RESIDENTIAL BURGLARIES

Today, a Shasta County jury found Melody Whittemore, 52, of Cottonwood, guilty of six felony counts in connection with the July 2008 burglaries of the homes of two elderly women.

Evidence presented at trial showed that Whittemore burglarized the home of a 66 year old Cottonwood woman on July 4, 2008. The victim was an acquaintance of the defendant. In that case, alert neighbors across the street from the victim's residence noticed the defendant and her vehicle and called law enforcement. Numerous items of jewelry were taken in the burglary.

Evidence also showed that on July 19, 2008, the defendant burglarized the home of a 70 year old Cottonwood woman who was an acquaintance of hers. In order to gain access to the woman's home, the defendant asked to borrow the woman's vehicle, claiming to have locked her own keys in her car. Whittemore then used the victim's keys to access her home and steal several thousand dollars worth of jewelry and coins.

Whittemore was convicted of two counts of residential burglary, two counts of theft from an elder adult, and two counts of theft with a prior theft-related conviction.

Following her conviction by the jury in this case, Whittemore pled no contest to two counts of forgery of a check in an unrelated case in connection with the embezzlement of funds from her former employer.

Whittemore faces a potential total prison sentence of eight years, eight months at her sentencing, scheduled for June 25, 2010.

The case was prosecuted by Senior Deputy District Attorney Benjamin Hanna and investigated by Detective Brian Jackson and Sergeant Steve Grashoff of the Shasta County Sheriff's Office. The victims were assisted throughout the court process by Victim Assistance Advocate Barbara Dorris.