BENTON COUNTY
SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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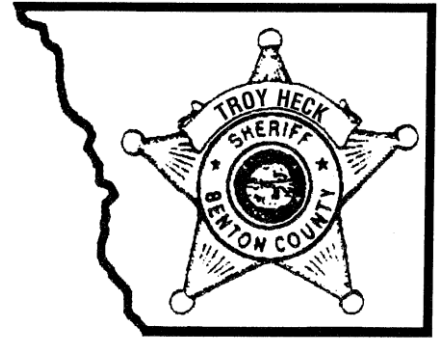**Administrative:** (320) 968-7201 • **FAX:** (320) 968-6885
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Troy Heck, Sheriff
Neal Jacobson, Chief Deputy

PRESS RELEASE

DATE: 07/27/2020

AUTHORITY OF SHERIFF TROY HECK

On July 25th, 2020 the Benton County Sheriff's Office arrested a man on charges of motor vehicle theft and burglary.

At about 3:30 pm on July 25th, the Benton County Sheriff's Office responded to a motor vehicle theft complaint in the 3900 block of Shaddowwood Drive NE in Minden Township. Responding deputies met the victim, Darrell Ervasti, and learned that a stranger had taken the keys to Ervasti's 2018 Ford F-150 and drove away with the truck. Ervasti reported that shortly before calling law enforcement, Ervasti had found a white male Ervasti did not know sitting inside Ervasti's truck. Ervasti reported that he asked this man what he was doing, and the man responded that he was interested in buying Ervasti's truck from him. Ervasti stated there was an older silver Ford F-150 parked near his truck that Ervasti believed the man used to get to the location on Shaddowwood Drive. Ervasti reported that he and the man engaged in friendly conversation for a few minutes before the man asked Ervasti what was needed to start Ervasti's truck. Ervasti stated the key fob was needed to start the truck and that he showed the man his key fob. Ervasti reported that the man snatched the key fob from his hand, jumped into Ervasti's truck, and drove away. Responding deputies gathered evidence at the scene and began investigating this theft.

At about 9:00 pm on July 25th, the Benton County Sheriff's Office received the report of a burglary and attempted motor vehicle theft from Minnesota Truck Headquarters, 1805 Hwy 23 NE in Minden Township. Matthew Jordet, the manager at Minnesota Truck Headquarters, reported that a white male had just left the business in a newer Ford F-150 after illegally entered the business and attempting to steal Jordet's car. Investigating deputies learned that the suspect had entered the business and set off the alarm. The suspect was captured on video surveillance moving throughout the closed business gathering keys to vehicles. By the time Jordet arrived at the business to investigate the alarm, the suspect was outside the building and back in the vehicle he had driven to the scene. While Jordet was inside the business, the suspect drove to the location of Jordet's vehicle and got into the driver's seat. Jordet reported seeing the man getting into Jordet's vehicle and confronting the man. Jordet was able to get the suspect out of Jordet's vehicle. Jordet reported the suspect then fled the scene in a newer F-150. Investigating deputies noted the complete description of the suspect vehicle matched that of Ervasti's stolen truck. Deputies responding to the area and found a man driving Ervasti's stolen truck at the intersection

of Hwy 23 and 35th Ave NE. Deputies followed the truck to the intersection of Hwy 23 and Lincoln Ave NE where the vehicle was stopped. Deputies found the driver to be Steven Douglas Nelson, age 40 of Pine City. Nelson was arrested without incident. Nelson was found to be in possession of several sets of keys that were identified as the property of Minnesota Truck Headquarters. Both Ervasti and Jordet identified Nelson as the man who had been at the scene of the theft from Ervasti and the burglary at Minnesota Truck Headquarters.

      Nelson was transported to the Benton County Jail where he is awaiting his first court appearance. The Benton County Sheriff's Office was assisted in this investigation by the St. Cloud Police Department.

Troy Heck
Benton County Sheriff