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Suffolk man cleared of malicious wounding of officer

SUFFOLK

It was late at night Dec. 27, 2008, when Robert Uhl pulled into his rural driveway off Old Myrtle Road. The police were waiting to talk to him, according to his sister. It was dark out there in the woods and cornfields.

When Uhl drove up to his home, an unmarked police car pulled in behind his small silver Neon, and a detective walked up to the driver's door, according to testimony in Suffolk Circuit Court Thursday.

Uhl panicked and backed up into the police car, barely scratching his own bumper, his defense attorney Justin Bush said.

Uhl was charged with attempted malicious wounding of a police officer and hit-and-run. Bush, however, accused the arresting officer of overreacting to Uhl's behavior.

A jury took less than an hour to find the 21-year-old Uhl not guilty of the crime.

"It wasn't his intent to kill or permanently maim or disfigure the officer," Bush said. "He acted on basic human instincts. Robert was upset, scared and crying."

Uhl pleaded guilty earlier in the day to destruction of property and obstruction of justice in another, unrelated crime. He was sentenced to 11 days in jail, which he has already served, and a fine of \$750.

Uhl had been in Western Tidewater Regional Jail since he was arrested in 2008.

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