

# Man sentenced for staging bank robbery and falsifying documents

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James L. Porter, Acting United States Attorney for the Southern District of Illinois, announced today that **Matthew S. Liebheit, 40, Moro, IL.**, was sentenced in federal court to 41 months in federal prison, to be followed by 4 years of supervised release on two counts of theft, embezzlement, or misapplication by a bank officer or employee and

one count false bank entries. Liebheit was also ordered to pay \$140,862 in restitution and a \$300 Special Assessment.

The charges stem from a purported bank robbery at Liberty Bank in Bethalto, Illinois, on Dec. 13, 2014. Liebheit, a bank manager at Liberty Bank, called police to report a bank robbery, indicating that a masked individual forced him into the bank at gun point prior to the bank opening. He gave a description of the suspect's vehicle and stated that he was forced to give that individual over \$280,000 from the bank's vault.

Further investigation revealed that Liebheit's truck was used as a getaway vehicle and Liebheit was involved in the planning of the staged bank robbery. The "robber" was identified as Eugene Babcock, who Liebheit recruited to do the "robbery," and who used a BB gun to make the robbery appear authentic. Additional investigation showed that Liebheit had also altered withdrawal documents from a Liberty Bank customer's account to reflect a larger than intended withdrawal from that customer's account. The day before the staged robbery, Liebheit falsified documentation to show a substantial deposit to that customer's account.

Babcock has pled guilty to his role in the staged robbery and is scheduled to be sentenced on March 30, 2016.

The case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Bethalto Police Department. The case is assigned to Assistant United States Attorneys Laura Reppert and Jonathan Drucker.