



NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Man Sentenced to 25 Years in Murder of Guardian

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that Skyler Russo, 26, of Springfield, Missouri entered a guilty plea to the 2009 murder of his guardian, Ms. Judith Roth.

Russo entered the guilty plea before the Honorable Calvin Holden to charge of murder in the second degree and was sentenced under the plea agreement to a term of 25 years in the Missouri Department of Corrections. During the plea, Russo admitted he killed Ms. Roth by suffocating her during an argument in their home on or about May 29, 2009.

The defendant had previously entered a plea of not guilty by reason of mental disease or defect based upon a private defense mental examination. A court-ordered mental examination conducted by the Missouri Department of Mental Health, found that, though Mr. Russo does have a diagnosable mental disease, at the time of the offense, Mr. Russo was aware of the nature, quality and wrongfulness of his conduct in killing Ms. Roth.

Murder in the second degree is a class A felony, with a range of punishment of 10 years to 30 years in the Missouri Department of Corrections. Because murder in the second degree is defined by law as a dangerous felony, Mr. Russo will have to serve 85% of his sentence before becoming eligible for parole.

This case investigated by the Springfield Police Deptment and Detective Kevin Shipley was the lead investigator assigned to the case.

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