



NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

REPEAT OFFENDER FOUND GUILTY OF DOMESTIC ASSAULT

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that Martin J. Sykes Jr, 43, of Springfield, MO was convicted today by a Greene County Jury of domestic assault.

Sykes was found guilty of domestic assault in the second degree, a class C felony offense. The jury deliberated for less than two hours before returning its verdict.

The offense took place on April 23, 2013. Eyewitnesses, who did not know the defendant or the victim, saw the defendant assaulting the victim in the roadway on Campbell near Parkview High School. Concerned about the victim's well-being, they called 911. Officers responded and then went to the residence where the defendant and victim were believed to have gone. When the defendant answered the door, the victim cried out, "Help, Officer." Officers separated the defendant from the victim, taking statements from each of them. The victim told the police that the defendant had punched her repeatedly. The victim was injured by the defendant – her face was bleeding, her eye was swollen, and she left the scene in an ambulance. According to the police officers, the defendant did not appear to be injured.

In a recorded interview with Detective Aaron Cassity with the Springfield Police Department, the defendant was advised of his Miranda rights and then tried to persuade the detective that he had only reacted to the victim, that while he "probably" punched her, he did not intentionally hurt the victim. The jury was able to watch the recorded interview to see the defendant's demeanor and the gestures he made throughout the interview.

Subject: Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Press Release, State v. Sykes, 1331-CR01612-01

The jury also learned that the defendant called the victim from the jail a few weeks after the assault. The jury listened to the recorded call, in which the victim told the defendant that he had hurt her and he said in response that he knew that he had and apologized.

While the defense tried to emphasize how many times that the victim had called the police in the past, this time, she was not the one who made the initial report. Concerned citizens called 911 and let the police know what they had witnessed. Without the call of those citizens and the knock on the door by police, the injuries to the victim might have been much worse.

The jury trial was presided over by The Honorable Thomas Mountjoy. The defendant is subject to a sentence of two to fifteen years, due to his prior convictions. He has previously been convicted of more than a dozen property crimes, three DWIs, and five misdemeanor assaults. Judge Mountjoy set a sentencing hearing for December 12, 2014 following a sentencing assessment report by the Department of Probation and Parole.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Emily Monroe and Sarah Devlin. It was investigated by the Springfield Police Dept. and Detective Aaron Cassity was the lead investigator assigned to the case.

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