



NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Man Sentenced to 7 Years for Domestic Assault

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that Darrell Jon Beetler, 53, of Ash Grove, MO was sentenced today for striking his girlfriend with his fists and with a can of food. On November 14, 2013, Beetler pled guilty to two counts of domestic assault in the second degree, stemming from an incident that occurred on January 15, 2013. Previous to the incident, the victim was in a romantic relationship with the defendant and had allowed the defendant and his minor son to move into her home. On January 15, 2013, the defendant and the victim were in a verbal argument and the defendant attacked the victim causing her to lose consciousness. When she woke up, the defendant was on top of her, hitting her in face with his fists and with a can of food. The defendant's minor son was present for the assault. Officer recovered several items of evidence, including the can of food. Officers noted that the can had human hair stuck to it. The victim's injuries included a cut to her face, bruises to her arms, face, scalp, and neck, and bite mark to her nose.

Beetler was also found to be a prior and persistent felony offender with convictions for unlawful use of a weapon and distribution of a controlled substance.

At sentencing the victim gave an impact statement where she described other beatings by the defendant and said that she felt like a "prisoner in her own home." The defendant argued that the victim returned to the relationship and the Judge should consider that a mitigating factor.

According to the National Network to End Domestic Violence, victims often return or stay with abusers for many reasons, many of them having to do with the abusers themselves. The NNEDV states that victims often do not leave because they have a real fear of death or more abuse if they leave. In fact, the US Bureau of Justice Statistics say that a victim's risk of getting killed greatly increased when they are in the

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process of leaving or have just left their abusers. Another factor is include that abusers make victims believe that the abuse is the victims' fault and, in turn, the victims believe that if they caused the violence, they can stop it. Other factors include that leaving is often financially difficult or impossible for victims and that often victims have complex feelings for their abusers and often simply want the abuse to end, but not the relationship.

At sentencing, the State asked for a 10 year sentence in the Missouri Department of Corrections. The defendant requested probation. The Honorable Calvin Holden sentenced the defendant to seven years on each count of domestic assault in the second degree, probation to be denied. The sentences are to run concurrently to each other, for a total sentence of seven years. Judge Holden then remanded the defendant to the Greene County Jail for transportation to the Missouri Department of Corrections.

If you are a victim of domestic violence or need help with domestic violence, you may contact Harmony House (formerly known as the Family Violence Center) at (417)864-SAFE (7233), the Victim Center at (417)863-7273, or the Missouri Coalition Against Domestic Violence at (573)636-3728.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Olivia McNair. It was investigated by the Springfield Police Dept. and Detective Alberto Estrada was the lead investigator assigned to the case.

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