

LANCASTER MAN SENTENCED TO 12 YEARS FOR VIOLENT HOME INVASION

11/27/13: Today Michael Winstead, 44 of Lancaster, was sentenced to 12 years in prison for a July home invasion where he forced his way into a house and attacked a resident with a butcher knife. Fairfield County Common Pleas Court Judge Richard Berens sentenced Winstead to 6 years for first degree felony Aggravated Burglary, plus 6 consecutive years on a charge of second degree felony Felonious Assault.

Witnesses testified that while drinking heavily on the afternoon of July 28, 2013, Winstead received a text from his ex-girlfriend that she was reuniting with the father of her children and wanted Winstead to stay away from her. Winstead reportedly became enraged and went to his ex-girlfriend's home with a butcher knife in his hand. Once there he repeatedly attempted to kick in the front door while residents inside tried holding it shut. Winstead then forced his way into the home through a side door and attacked his ex-girlfriend's boyfriend, repeatedly attempting to slash him while the Victim fended Winstead off with a broom handle. Lancaster Police officers arrived quickly, at which point Winstead confronted them with the knife in his hand, ignoring numerous orders at gun point to drop his weapon before police were ultimately forced to taser him.

Winstead was found guilty of all counts at trial on November 20th, 2013, with jurors returning their verdict after less than an hour of deliberations. At sentencing Judge Berens noted Winstead's extensive criminal record since the late 80's, including multiple prior prison sentences for offenses such as Burglary and Robbery. Berens further expressed concern that even at the time of this offense Winstead was not only already on probation with Municipal Court, but also out on bond awaiting trial for new misdemeanor charges.

Fairfield County Prosecuting Attorney Gregg Marx stated: "We are very thankful for the service these jurors rendered at trial, and equally pleased the Court imposed such a tough but deserved sentence for a repeat offender whose violent behavior might have resulted in a more serious crime. The brave victims and cooperative citizens really saved the day and our community has much to be thankful for."

The law enforcement investigation in this case was conducted by LPD Detective Dan Thomas and Officer Alex Sinewe. The trial was prosecuted by Fairfield County Chief Assistant Prosecutor Darren Meade, and Assistant Prosecutor Andrea Green who had been sworn in as an attorney barely two weeks earlier.

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Gregg Marx
Prosecuting Attorney