



CHRISTIAN COUNTY PROSECUTING ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

AMY J. FITE, PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
Phone: (417) 581-7915 | Fax: (417) 581-7918
www.christiancountyprosecutor.net

OZARK, MO – The Christian County Prosecuting Attorney's Office announced that William Copher, dob: 07/05/1973 of Nixa, Missouri was found guilty after a jury trial presided over by the Honorable Judge Mark Orr on September 9, 2013, of unlawful use of a weapon and domestic assault in the third degree. The jury deliberated twenty-four (24) minutes.

First Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Janette Bleau represented the State of Missouri. Evidence presented by the State included:

Victim K.M. testified that during the period of 01-03-12 to 01-04-12 while at her home in Christian County, Missouri her boyfriend, William E. Copher, engaged in a series of physical attacks and threats against her; including hitting, slapping, and stomping her in the face and head, throwing hot butter on her legs, threatening to burn and cut her face, threatening her with a knife to dismember her and kill her. K.M. testified that defendant further cut off her ability to communicate or leave the residence by taking away her car keys and phone. K.M testified defendant had threatened to kill her if she ever told anyone what he did. K.M told the jury she was afraid and believed Mr. Copher would kill her. K.M. stated that she caused a black eye to defendant when he had her on the floor, and he was on top of her, her puppy tried to protect her barking at the defendant and defendant punched the puppy to get it away from him. K.M. stated when defendant did that, she struck him in the facing causing a black eye. Deputy Durham, of the Christian County Sheriff's Department, testified regarding booking the defendant into the jail on January 8, 2013 and to the booking photo taken that day of the defendant showing defendant with a black eye.

Deputy K. Heitman, of the Christian County Sheriff's Department, and Sue Ann Robinson, of Missouri State Probation and Parole Office both testified that on January 5, 2013, they made contact with K.M. and noticed injuries to K.M. such as: her left eye was swollen, black, blue, and red in color; a cut to the back of her scalp; blood in her hair; burns to her legs and bruising to her ear. Photographs of K.M.'s injuries were also presented as evidence to the jury. Deputy Heitman and Ms. Robinson testified that K.M. was crying and distraught and that K.M. told her that defendant had threatened to kill her if she ever told anyone what he did. K.M told them she was afraid and believed Mr. Copher would kill her.

Further, the Court found the defendant to be a prior and persistent felony offender based on the following:

On or about July 14, 2003, defendant was convicted of the felony of burglary in the second degree in the Circuit Court of Greene County, Missouri, Case no. 31302CF6045, and

On or about July 24, 1992, defendant was convicted of the felony of burglary in the second degree, in the Circuit Court of Greene County, Missouri, Case no. 591CR1334.

Further, the Court found the defendant to have two prior domestic assault in the third degree convictions based on the following:

On or about November 6, 2002, defendant pleaded guilty to class A misdemeanor of domestic assault in the Circuit Court of Greene County, Missouri, Case No. 31301CF7597.

On or about July 14, 2003, defendant pleaded guilty to the class A misdemeanor of domestic assault in the third degree in the Circuit Court of Greene County, Missouri, Case No. 31302CF11711.

As a prior and persistent offender, the range of punishment for unlawful use of a weapon is: one year in the Christian County Jail or two to seven years in the Department of Corrections and/or up to a \$5000 fine.

Range of punishment for domestic assault in the third degree, with 2 prior third degree domestic assaults, and as a prior and persistent felony offender is: one year in the Christian County Jail or two to seven years in the Department of Corrections and/or up to a \$5000 fine.

Sentencing is set for November 22, 2013.