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May 26, 2010

GAFFNEY MAN RECEIVES LIFE PRISON SENTENCE FOR ASSAULT & RAPE

A Gaffney man received a life prison sentence without parole today after a Cherokee County jury determined that he choked and stabbed a woman during a sexual assault.

Donald Scott Jones, 41, was found guilty of first-degree criminal sexual conduct and assault and battery with intent to kill at the conclusion of a two-day jury trial.

The crime occurred May 29, 2009. Gaffney police found the 54-year-old victim lying on the front steps of a neighbor's home. Her shirt was blood-soaked from a stab wound to her left breast and she had red marks around her neck. The victim named Jones as her attacker in her initial conversation with police.

Police took Jones into custody a short time later at a nearby home. He told police the couple had consensual sex.

The victim described the violence in detail during her trial testimony and earlier interviews with police and medical personnel. She testified she cut the assailant's hand in an attempt to defend herself. Jones had visible injuries that substantiated her account. Police also recovered DNA evidence at the crime scene that was later matched back to Jones.

Jones was sentenced in accordance with the state law for repeat violent offenders. His prior criminal history spanned 24 years and it included a 2009 conviction for assault and battery with intent to kill.

"Donald Jones is the perfect illustration why our state has tough sentencing guidelines for repeat violent offenders," Assistant Solicitor Kim Leskanic said. "He is a proven danger to the community."

Leskanic teamed with Principal Deputy Solicitor Barry Barnette to prosecute the case.

For more information, contact Murray Glenn at 809-4892.

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