

Alton Man is Convicted of First-Degree Murder by Madison County Jury

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE — Brian L. Edelen, of Alton, was convicted by a jury of first-degree murder in a Madison County jury on Thursday in Edwardsville.

A Madison County jury found an Alton man guilty of first-degree murder today following a stabbing death that took place outside an Alton home on November 29, 2018.

Edelen (d.o.b. 8/29/88) was convicted by a jury of first-degree murder after he admitted to stabbing the 41-year-old victim, John C. Jackson, in the neck leaving him to quickly die at the scene from excessive blood loss. The defendant hid from law enforcement for 16 days until December 14, 2018, when he was arrested by the Alton Police Department with assistance from U.S. Marshalls.

Edelen was found in a Bunker Hill residence with four knives on him. Despite the abundance of lies from the defendant, a multitude of evidence was presented against Edelen. Assistant State's Attorney's Kerri Davis and Jacob Harlow shared a jail phone call of the defendant bragging and laughing about murdering Mr. Jackson.

Other evidence included video surveillance cameras, audio recordings, and text messages sent by the defendant. In evidence and testimonies, the defendant stated he should have murdered his girlfriend and friend, too. When cross-examined by Assistant State's Attorney Kerri Davis, Edelen admitted to lying when he is angry and did not actually mean those remarks.

In closings, Assistant State's Attorney Jacob Harlow referred to these actions as "willing to lie and intimidate to escape justice." The defendant has a prior criminal history with two felony convictions consisting of aggravated battery in 2006 and felon in possession of a firearm in 2013.

"Mr. Jackson was simply in the wrong place at the wrong time. I want to express my deepest condolences to Mr. Jackson's family and friends. The senseless acts of the defendant have left children to grow up without a father and Miss Shaw to live without her beloved fiancé of seven years," stated State's Attorney Tom Gibbons.

Gibbons commended the work of his Assistant State's Attorneys Kerri Davis and Jacob Harlow. In addition, he recognized the Alton Police Department, U.S. Marshalls, Illinois State Police CSI and Division of Forensic Sciences, Madison County Coroner's Office, Alton Fire Department, and Alton Memorial Hospital and Ambulance Services for all of their efforts with the crime scene and investigation.

"Thank you to the jurors for their due diligence and thank you to Judge Kyle Napp for leading a just trial," Gibbons stated. Edelen's sentencing will be held at a later date. He will be sentenced to 20-60 years served at 100 percent.