

# **Bethalto Woman Andrea S. Leisgang Sentenced to 75 Years in Prison for Sexually Assaulting Two Minors**

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EDWARDSVILLE — A Bethalto woman - Andrea S. Leisgang - has been sentenced to 75 years in prison for sexually assaulting two minors dating from 2016 to 2018.

Madison County State's Attorney Tom Gibbons announced the sentence Tuesday morning.

Leisgang (d.o.b. 03/01/82) was indicted on December 20, 2018, with 9 counts of Criminal Sexual Assault and 6 counts of Predatory Criminal Sexual Assault of Child. The defendant pleaded guilty to one count of Criminal Sexual Assault, a Class 1 felony ranging 10-15 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections (IDOC) and one count of Predatory Criminal Sexual Assault, a Class X felony ranging 10-60 years in the IDOC.

Leisgang was charged with her husband, Jeremy Leisgang, for sexually abusing four victims, three juvenile females and one juvenile male, at their home beginning in 2016. Jeremy Leisgang pleaded guilty on October 4, 2019. He was sentenced to 40 years and is required to serve 85 percent of the sentence imposed. Andrea Leisgang was only charged for the hands-on acts she committed against two of the four victims her husband was charged for. However, because of a propensity motion granted during pre-trial motions, evidence showed she had knowledge of the acts perpetrated against the other two children.

Leisgang pled guilty to two counts on two of the children. The plea agreement was reached after consultation with the victims and their families. In cases of sexual assault, it is required that children testify at trial which can often be difficult for young victims. This plea sends the defendant to prison for a substantial period of time. Additionally, it requires Leisgang to register as a sex offender for the rest of her life.

“Children trust parents and adults to provide a safe environment and protect them from the dangers of this world. The trust of these children was violated so horribly by the defendants in this case and, sadly, we may never be able to fully repair the damage and terrible harm done to them. Locking these individuals behind bars for the rest of their lives will never erase their despicable crimes, but we can at least be sure they will never hurt another child again,” said State's Attorney Tom Gibbons.

Gibbons recognized his prosecutors Assistant State's Attorney Kathleen Nolan, head of the Children's Justice Division and Assistant State's Attorney Ali Foley, for their persistence with this heinous case. He also thanked the Bethalto Police Department, Pontoon Beach Police Department, Department of Children and Family Services, the Madison County Child Advocacy Center, and medical personnel for providing immediate assistance in ensuring a critical investigation and the safety of the victims.

Fitz, the Madison County Courthouse Facility Dog, served as another instrumental part of this case. Fitz is an English Labrador Retriever, uniquely trained by Duo Dogs, Inc. located in St. Louis, Missouri. As a Courthouse Facility Dog, Fitz specializes in providing comfort and support to victims throughout the court process. He is

accompanied by his handler, Tiffany Brooks, a Victim Advocate for the State's Attorney's Office. The children in this case connected with Fitz very early and were always excited to see him. During the sentencing hearing, Fitz sat with the children before and after they gave their victim impact statements detailing the physical and mental pain they endured because of the cruel actions of the defendant.

Fitz, described as a gentle soul, sat in the courtroom with his head in their laps and wrapping his paws around their feet. In cases especially with juvenile victims, Fitz' accompaniment makes an awful experience more tolerable in the courage and comfort he bestows.

Also at the sentencing hearing were the Bikers Against Child Abuse (BACA), who provided physical and emotional support to the victims who were present in court. Judge Richard Tognarelli sentenced Leisgang to 60 years on the Class X felony and 15 years on the Class 1 felony, for a total of 75 years served consecutively at 85 percent in the IDOC.

"A lifetime in prison is absolutely appropriate for this woman who systematically preyed on these children and committed the most horrific and unspeakable acts," First Assistant State's Attorney Crystal Uhe said. "Madison County is a safer place with both her and her codefendant locked behind bars. I'm proud of our prosecutors for achieving justice for these victims."