

Madison County State's Attorney Team Convicts Child Predator Michael A. Weis Of Granite City

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE — The Madison County State's Attorney's Office announced today that a jury found a man - Michael A. Weis of Granite City - guilty of all counts of sexual assault, sexual abuse, and solicitation of child pornography of a 13-year-old female victim.

Weis, (d.o.b. 5/21/81), was convicted of two counts of Aggravated Criminal Sexual Abuse, Class 2 felonies; three counts of Criminal Sexual Assault, Class 1 felonies; and three counts of Child Pornography, Class 1 felonies. The verdict came in late Thursday evening finding him guilty of all eight counts.

Madison County State's Attorney Tom Gibbons recognized the exceptional work of his Children's Justice Division, led by Assistant State's Attorney Kathleen Nolan and her co-counsel Assistant State's Attorney Emily Bell, whose trial preparation and examination of witnesses led to the guilty verdict for all counts. Gibbons also recognized the tireless work and determination of the Granite City Police Department who secured the necessary electronic evidence and conducted critical interviews of witnesses and the defendant used to convict Weis.

"Catching and convicting predators is a top priority in our execution of Madison County justice. Working together with our partners in law enforcement, we will never rest in our fight to protect the children of our community from predators by finding them wherever they lurk and putting them behind bars," Gibbons said.

Fitz, the Madison County Courthouse Facility dog and his handler Tiffany Brooks, who is a victim advocate for the State's Attorney's Office, sat with the victim and her friend throughout the entirety of the trial. Fitz, a gentle soul, provided emotional support to the minors by being a comforting figure during the overwhelming experience.

On March 19, 2017, the 13-year-old female victim disclosed to her foster mother that she had been sexually assaulted by the defendant. The victim's biological mother was a friend of the defendant and had disclosed to Weis her daughter wanted to become a police officer. Weis was an auxiliary police officer in Granite City. Auxiliary police volunteers are not members of the regular police department of the municipality. Auxiliary police are called to assist with traffic control, crowd control, and natural disasters.

Weis initiated a conversation on Facebook Messenger with the victim inviting her to his auxiliary police meeting. Having no prior criminal history, the defendant passed the necessary background checks to serve as a mentor figure and fulfill the victim's interest in becoming a police officer.

The mentorship evolved into sexual communication via Snapchat where the defendant solicited nude images from the young victim. The images were saved in a secret photo app on the defendant's phone which was used as evidence in the case.

Once Weis gained the trust of the victim, on more than one occasion of scheduled auxiliary police meetings, the defendant took the victim to his house and his newly developed gaming business where he committed acts of sexual penetration and rubbed the sex organs of the 13-year-old victim.

The case revolved around the powerful testimony of the now, 16-year-old victim, who provided an emotional recollection of the horrific trauma she endured from the sexual acts committed by Weis. Other crucial testimonies were heard from Patty Radcliffe, an expert therapist from Alternative Counseling, who testified on children's response to sexual abuse, and the victim's now 16-year-old friend, who she first disclosed her story to, which corroborated the testimony of the victim.

Weis' bond was revoked last night following the verdict.

According to Illinois state law, Counts 1-3 of Criminal Sexual Assault carry a sentencing range of 4-15 years per count, served consecutively at a mandatory 85 percent. Counts 1-3 of Child Pornography carry a sentencing range of 4-15 years per count, mandatory consecutive with day-to-day credit. Aggravated Criminal Sexual Abuse carries 3-7 years per count served with day-to-day credit but can also be probationable. The defendant could face a sentence of more than 90 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections.