



Killer Gets 45 Years Plus

by Sanford Schmidt

January 27 2022 5:12 PM

EDWARDSVILLE - A judge Thursday sentenced a killer to 45 years in prison on a murder charge after the victim's girlfriend testified she was held down while her boyfriend, Darian Woods, struggled for his life.



“Criminals entered my home and killed the one person I wanted to spend my life with,” the girlfriend, Lauren Swearengen, testified at a sentencing hearing for George Lacey, 27, of Collinsville.

She said that when she testified at trial, “It was like living through it all over again.” She has had to seek therapy to overcome her emotional reaction, she said. She added she will never find another like Woods, she said in her victim impact statement.

“I was unable to function for the first few months after the crime,” Woods’ mother, Lisa Farnsworth, said in her victim impact statement.

Lacey was found guilty on Oct. 15 of first-degree murder and being a felon in possession of a weapon. He was previously convicted of armed robbery in 2015 in St. Clair County and sentenced to eight years in prison.

Circuit Judge Kyle Napp sentenced Lacey to 45 years in prison for the murder and seven years in prison for unlawful possession of a weapon by a felon. The seven-year sentence would be consecutive to the murder sentence, but he would get a day off for every “good” day he serves. He must serve every day of the murder sentence.

Lacey and two other men were charged in the crime. Demandrell Davis has also been accused of first-degree murder and other charges in the case and is awaiting trial. He and Lacey were accused of breaking into the Collinsville house to steal money and drugs.

Adissa Smith drove the two others to the house and was charged with armed robbery. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 10 years in prison.

Lacey claimed at the sentencing Thursday that he is innocent. “Justice was not served. There is no evidence I was involved in this crime,” he said in his statement on his own behalf.

The judge said there was more than enough evidence. She pointed out that Lacey’s fingerprint was found on the doorbell of the Collinsville home and that shoes similar to his were found in a trash can at the residence. She added that Smith also testified.

She noted that the jury spent about 13 hours over a day and a half, indicating that they took their job seriously. The jury did exactly as they were supposed to do,” she said.