

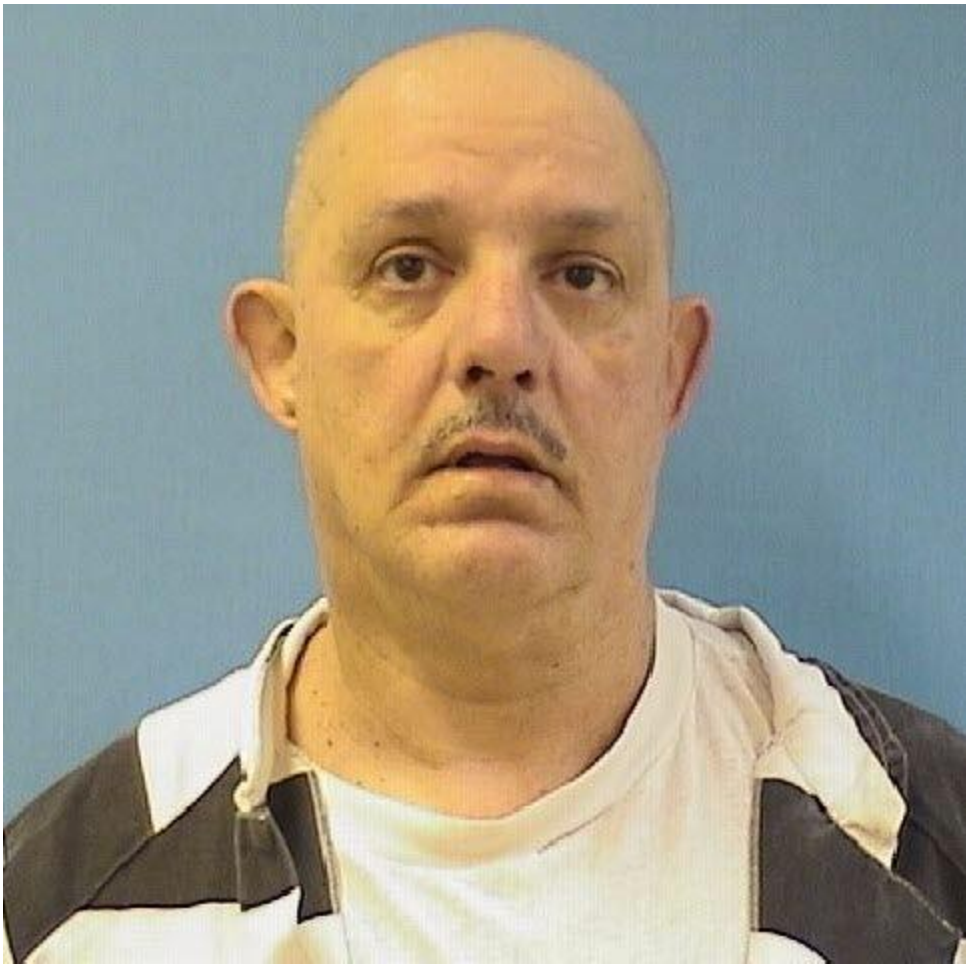


# **Jury Deliberates Just 40 Minutes To Convict Richard D. Mayor Of First Degree Murder**

by Brian Brueggemann  
June 1 2023 3:05 PM

EDWARDSVILLE - A Madison County jury deliberated just 40 minutes Thursday before finding a man guilty of first-degree murder for intentionally striking a woman with his pickup along a highway in Pontoon Beach. The jury convicted Richard D. Mayor, 60, in connection with the death of Lisa M. Dunnivant-Polach, 46, on Feb. 21, 2023. The two had been in a relationship but became involved in a dispute.

Mayor and Dunnivant-Polach were residents of East St. Louis. Evidence and testimony showed that Dunnivant-Polach was on foot along Illinois Route 111 and trying to evade Mayor, who was driving a pickup. The driver of a tractor-trailer, seeing that the victim was in distress, pulled over to help her. As Dunnivant-Polach tried to get into the semi, she was hit by Mayor's pickup.



The driver of the semi, a former Marine, testified that he pulled the microphone wire off his CB radio and used it to tie a tourniquet on the victim's severed leg. Despite her injuries, Dunnivant-Polach was able to tell the semi-driver that the pickup was driven by her boyfriend.

"We highly commend the fellow motorists and emergency responders who heroically tried to help Lisa Dunnivant-Polach and save her life," Haine said. "These Good Samaritans continued to do the right thing, by having the courage to come to court and tell the jury what the victim could not: that it was Richard Mayor who mowed her down, and that she did not want to die."

According to testimony, the injured Dunnivant-Polach told rescuers: "I have children. I'm not ready to die yet." She was taken to a St. Louis hospital, where she died of her injuries.



Pontoon Beach Police quickly arrived on the scene, attempting life-saving measures and developing information about a suspect vehicle. Mayor's vehicle, a white pickup that had become disabled, was soon located about 5 miles away on Illinois 203 in Granite City. A Madison County sheriff's deputy located Mayor near the vehicle and took him into custody. Assistant State's Attorney Luke Yager, during his closing argument, replayed surveillance video that showed the victim trying to evade Mayor's truck and trying to get into the semi.

"She was going to get away, and now was the time to act," Yager argued. Mayor asked jurors to consider convicting him of a lesser offense, reckless homicide. Mayor testified that he accidentally struck the victim after his foot got stuck between his truck's brake and accelerator. He also testified that he continued driving after the impact because he

“blacked out.” In addition, he testified that he figured the damage to his truck was caused by hitting a deer. Yager, in his closing argument, called Mayor’s account “fantastical.”

The case was prosecuted by Yager and Assistant State’s Attorney Morgan Hudson. Haine said, “The outstanding work of police, the testimony of the witnesses and the diligent work of prosecutors allowed the jury to quickly see through this killer’s many lies. This was an extreme case of domestic violence. We will continue to strive to hold domestic abusers accountable.”

Mayor will be sentenced later and is eligible for an extended sentence of 60 to 100 years in prison. Circuit Judge Kyle Napp presided at the trial.