

# **Bethalto woman, once Edwardsville Police Department dispatcher, sentenced for role in obstructing an investigation**

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A Bethalto woman who once worked as a dispatcher for the Edwardsville Police Department was sentenced this afternoon for her role in obstructing an investigation into a former Edwardsville police officer.

Keri L. Knight, 42, who was convicted of two counts of felony obstruction following a one-day bench trial on July 21, 2015, by Circuit Judge Kyle Napp, was sentenced to 24 months' probation on each count (to be served concurrently) and ordered to perform 100 hours of community service.

Knight was indicted by a Madison County Grand Jury in January on two counts of Obstructing Justice (Class 4 felony) for providing false information to investigators and concealing evidence connected to the investigation. The officer, Brian Barker, 42, was charged in December 2014 and February 2015 with official misconduct, money laundering, arson, possession of stolen firearms and multiple counts of burglary following an investigation into numerous burglaries in the area.

State's Attorney Tom Gibbons commended the work of his prosecutors, First Assistant State's Attorney Jennifer Mudge and Crystal Uhe, Chief of the Criminal Division, for securing a felony conviction against Knight. "Hindering an investigation and attempting to obstruct justice is something that my office and the courts take very seriously, especially when the defendant is a public employee who violated her basic duties."

Knight, who had been free on bond pending sentencing, faced penalties ranging from probation to 1-3 years in prison. Assistant State's Attorney Uhe had requested that Knight be sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections.

At the request of the Edwardsville Police Department, detectives with the Madison County Sheriff's Department led the investigations into both Barker and Knight. Barker's case remains pending; he is currently out on bond. His charges, as well as statements made herein, are based upon probable cause. The defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.