



J. HANLEY

WINNEBAGO COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

PRESS RELEASE
October 19, 2023
State's Attorney J. Hanley

Winnebago County State's Attorney J. Hanley announces that **Willie E. Thomas, Jr. (DOB: 9/22/1972)** was found guilty of Attempt First Degree Murder, Vehicular Invasion, Aggravated Domestic Battery, Aggravated Stalking and Domestic Battery after a jury trial in front of the Honorable Judge Jennifer Clifford.

On February 11, 2022, a female victim was stopped at the intersection of Woodlawn and Locust Street in Rockford when she was approached by her ex-boyfriend, Willie Thomas. Thomas held the knife to her neck through a cracked window, and stated that she was going to die. Thomas then entered the backseat of the vehicle, and repeatedly stabbed her as she was driving. The vehicle came to a stop in the intersection of N Rockton and N Winnebago, where she was able to escape. She flagged down a school bus, where she found refuge. She had been stabbed at least 11 times, and had multiple wounds to her head, chest, arms, shoulder, leg, and back. During the course of investigation, Rockford Police Detectives uncovered evidence that Thomas was following her that morning as she left her residence to go to work, as she left work, and while she was running errands just prior to the attack.

Attempt First Degree Murder is a Class X Felony that is punishable by a sentence of 6-30 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The term is to be served at 85% and followed by three years of Mandatory Supervised Release.

Vehicular Invasion is a Class 1 Felony that is punishable by a sentence of 4-15 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections and followed by one year of Mandatory Supervised Release.

Aggravated Domestic Battery is a Class 2 Felony that is punishable by a sentence of 3-7 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections and followed by four years of Mandatory Supervised Release.

Aggravated Stalking is a Class 3 Felony that is punishable by a sentence of 2-5 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections followed by four years of Mandatory Supervised Release.

Domestic Battery is a Class 4 Felony that is punishable by a term of 1-6 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections and followed by four years of Mandatory Supervised Release.



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Thomas is scheduled to be back in court on January 25, 2024 for a Sentencing hearing in front of the Honorable Judge Clifford.

The Rockford Police Department conducted the investigation in this case. Assistant State's Attorneys Alex Ronning and Andrew Marcum handled the prosecution.

CONTACT PERSON:

J. Hanley, Winnebago County State's Attorney