



**J. HANLEY**

WINNEBAGO COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

**PRESS RELEASE**  
**November 26, 2025**  
**State's Attorney J. Hanley**

Winnebago County State's Attorney J. Hanley announces that on November 14, 2025, the Honorable Judge Debra Schafer sentenced **Eugene N. Heffron (D.O.B. 10/12/1939)** to three years of felony probation, 180 days of jail in the Winnebago County Jail, and sex offender treatment for three guilty verdicts of Aggravated Criminal Sexual Abuse. Heffron was found guilty by a jury in October 2022. The defendant will have to register as a sex offender for the remainder of his life.

The case stems from a 2018 investigation by the Illinois State Police after a victim came forward and reported that Heffron had touched her inappropriately. At the time of the offenses, Heffron was employed as a professional ice-skating coach with the Rockford Park District. Mr. Heffron had previously represented the U.S. at the 1968 Winter Olympics as part of the U.S. ice dancing demonstration team.

The defendant was convicted of abuse that occurred during skating lessons at the Carlson Ice Arena between 1999 and 2006, when the victim was under the age of 17. Heffron faced additional charges involving similar conduct toward two other victims under the age of 17. Those charges were severed and not part of this trial; however, one of the additional victims was permitted to testify at trial.

Aggravated Criminal Sexual Abuse is a Class 2 Felony, where the defendant may be sentenced for up to four years of probation and six months in jail, depending on the circumstances. The defendant could have been sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections for between 3 to 7 years followed by four years of Mandatory Supervised Release.

The Rockford Police Department led the investigation. The case was prosecuted by First Assistant State's Attorney Ken LaRue.

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