

CENTRALIA MAN CHARGED WITH FELONY SEXUAL ASSAULT

(SALEM, IL) — Bail has been set at \$250,000 for a 24-year-old Centralia man charged with multiple counts of sexually assaulting a 6-year-old child. Jerad W. Peoples has been formally charged in Marion County court with four Class X felony counts of predatory criminal sexual assault of a victim under the age of 13. Each count is punishable by up to 30 years in prison if convicted. According to Marion County Sheriff's detective Anthony Decker, the case was brought to light in the last few weeks, when the Department of Children and Family Services Hotline received a call about the alleged incidents. The agency investigated the complaint and notified the sheriff's department, which then joined in the investigation. The child, who by statute is a family member according to Decker, was taken to the Amy Center in Mt. Vernon, where she described the alleged assaults dating back to December 2013. Peoples was transported to the Marion County jail, and says he will hire a private attorney. A first appearance with counsel has been scheduled for January 28. Last week Peoples was sentenced in Marion County court to 18 months probation and 10 days periodic imprisonment after he pleaded guilty to a 2014 misdemeanor charge of domestic battery. He was also ordered to complete drug and alcohol evaluations with treatment, abstain from drugs and alcohol with testing, to complete anger management as directed, and to have no contact with the victim.