

DeFuniak man found guilty of 2008 rape

John Williams Jr. faces up to 15-year prison sentence

Florida Freedom Newspapers

DeFUNIAK SPRINGS — John Lewis Williams Jr. faces up to 15 years in prison after being convicted of rape. He is scheduled to be sentenced June 15, according to prosecutor Ruston Sanders.



JOHN LEWIS WILLIAMS JR.

A three-man, three-woman jury deliberated for about 40 minutes last week before finding Williams guilty.

The rape occurred the evening of May 26, 2008. Williams, 32, of DeFuniak Springs, has been in custody since his arrest Sept. 26. Buddy Gissendanner, Williams' public defender, said he plans to appeal.

According to the arrest report, Williams threatened to leave the victim in a remote wooded area unless she agreed to have sex with him. When she refused, he drove down a narrow road that runs through the Eglin Air Force Base reservation and again demanded sex.

The report further states the "Victim did not consent, but was fearful to physically resist Williams."

Williams put on a condom and "had sexual intercourse... against her will, in the front seat of his car," then discarded the condom on the ground, the arrest report continues. "The victim reported the rape the following day. When investigators interviewed Williams, he denied raping the woman."

However, Sheriff's Office investigators retrieved the condom and other evidence from the scene. An analysis of the condom confirmed the presence of DNA from both Williams and the victim.

"All I have done is lie to (the victim) and say I would pay her speeding tickets," Williams wrote in a letter to Circuit Judge Kelvin C. Wells in December. "I was wrong for that. I was also wrong for leaving my girlfriend... at home alone every night for a month while I hung out with (the victim)."

FATHER FUD'S RIBBON CUTTING



SUBMITTED BY DESTIN AREA CHAMBER OF COMMERCE

On May 12, Destin Area Chamber of Commerce staff and ambassadors gathered to celebrate Father Fud's Central Market beside Fudpucker's Beachside Bar & Grill in Destin with a ribbon cutting. Hours of operation are 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., seven days a week.

BUSINESS FOR THE GOOD



SUBMITTED BY MEGAN PRAWOZIK

Nightown's Operations Manager James "JJ" Johnson (far left) presents President and Chief Professional Officer of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast Crawford "Bear" Henley (second from left) a donation of almost \$3,000 raised May 15 and 16 by the nightclub. Also pictured are Marketing Director for Nightown David A. Williams (2nd from right) and Chief Volunteer Officer of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Emerald Coast Board of Directors Bradley Cobble (far right).

Local PR firms shine in regional competition

A number of local people and firms were winners in the Northwest Florida Image Awards held by the Pensacola Chapter of the Florida Public Relations Association, in conjunction with the Northwest Florida Coast Chapter of the FPRA on April 25 at the University of West Florida.

The Northwest Florida Image Awards are the first step to entry into the state-level Golden Image Awards, which have become an industry standard of public relations excellence in the state of Florida.

The awards competition is held annually to recognize outstanding public relations programs and to encourage the development of public relations professionalism in the region.

The partnership between the Northwest Florida Coast and the Pensacola Chapters yielded the largest local Image Award submissions in the state with a total of 30 entries.

THE WINNERS

Grand All Winner:
Division A-7, Promotional/Marketing
Silver Sands Factory Stores
Midnight Madness
Silver Sands Factory Stores

The Division B Grand Winner:
Division B-3, Magazine
Vie People and Place Magazine
Cornerstone Marketing and Advertising
Lisa Burwell, Gerald Burwell, Eric Shepard

Division C Grand Winner:
Division C-5, Video - Public Service/One Minute or Less
Donate Today PSA: Council

on Aging
Council on Aging
Jeff Nail

Division A-1, Community Relations
Toys For Tots - Destin Commons
Phelan & Lowry
Kay Phelan, Crystal Petti, Jessica Proffitt
Award of Distinction and Judges' Award

Division A-3, Institutional Support Your BBB's Vision of an Ethical Workplace
BBB of NWFL
Karen Szulczewski
Image Award

Division A-7, Promotional/Marketing
Little Change/Do Us Good
Gulf Power Company
Award of Distinction

Division A-7, Promotional/Marketing
Silver Sands Factory Stores
Midnight Madness
Silver Sands Factory Stores
Image Award

Division A-8, Public Affairs
Jack Abbit/Fire Commissioner
Election-South Walton County Fire District
Phelan & Lowry
Kay Phelan, Jack Abbit
Judges' Award

Division A-9, Special Events
Pensacola Celebrity Chefs
Pensacola Bay Area Convention and Visitor's Bureau
Ed Schroeder, Mike Bersabal, Laura Lee
Award of Distinction

Division A-9, Special Event
Santa Rosa County's Emergency Management Open House
Santa Rosa County Public Information,
Div. of Emergency Management
Image Award

Division A-10, Other
Rockin Rockwell Modern Day Art Series-Destin Commons
Phelan & Lowry
Kay Phelan, Crystal Petti, Jessica Proffitt
Award of Distinction

Division B-3, Magazine Vie People and Place Magazine
Cornerstone Marketing and Advertising
Lisa Burwell, Gerald Burwell, Eric Shepard
Image Award

Division B-4, Newsletter-One To Three Color
Power Update
Gulf Power Company
Award of Distinction

Division B-5, Newsletter-Four Color
Gulf Currents
Gulf Power Company
Award of Distinction

Division B-5, Newsletter-Four Color
University of West Florida, Connection, Spring 2008
UWF Marketing Communications
Image Award

Division B-6, Poster And Calendar

Ronald Mcdonald House
Hearts of Hope 2009 Calendar
Ronald Mcdonald House
Charities of Northwest Florida
Judges' Award

Division B-7, News Release
Santa Rosa County's "Low Cost Spay Neuter Program"
Santa Rosa County
Joy Tsubooka, Santa Rosa County Public Information
Image Award and Judges' Award

Division B-7, News Release
Destin Magazine Feature Story-Fifth Anniversary Of Destin Commons
Phelan & Lowry
Kay Phelan, Crystal Petti, Linda Christiansen
Judges' Award

Division B-10, Other
Pensacola Little Theatre
"Cabaret Rocks Through The Ages" Save The Date Card
Pensacola Little Theatre
D. Auriette Lindsey
Judges' Award

Division C-2, Electronic Communications
Visit Pensacola Blog
Pensacola Bay Area Convention & Visitors Bureau
Ed Schroeder, Mike Bersabal, Laura Lee
Award of Distinction and Judges' Award

Division C-5, Video - Public Service/One Minute or Less
Donate Today Psa: Council on Aging
Council on Aging
Jeff Nail
Image Award and Judges'

Award

Division C-5, Video - Public Service/One Minute or Less
Roll Call Psa-Boys & Girls Club
Boys & Girls Club
Susan Shaw, James Lopez, Andrea Raliff
Award of Distinction

Division C-9, Web Site
UWF Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics Web Site
University of West Florida
Jaimie Woodard, Janice Cooper, Megan Tyson
Award of Distinction

Division C-11, Other
Santa Rosa County's E-Breaking News
Santa Rosa County Public Information, Div. of Emergency Management, Computer Department
Image Award and Judges' Award

Division D-5 Public Relations Campaign
2008 UWF Leadership Communication Portfolio
University of West Florida
Amanda Short, Caitlyn Blizzard
Award of Distinction and Judges Award

Division D-5 Public Relations Campaign
University of West Florida
Jelsel Airlines
Victoria Stafford, Shea Byrne, John Williams
Award of Distinction
Pensacola Chapter