



Genesee County Prosecutor's Office David Leyton, Prosecutor



Jury Convicts Man in Drunk Driving Death in Lapeer County

July 20, 2006

LAPEER, MI – A Lapeer County jury has convicted 28-year old Matthew J. Soares of Deford in the August 19, 2004 traffic death of 59-year old William Day of Almont. Soares faces up to 15 years in prison for his conviction of Operating While Intoxicated Causing Death and Manslaughter with a Motor Vehicle. A September 5th sentencing date has been set in Lapeer County Circuit Court.

The case against Soares was assigned to Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton to alleviate issues that had arisen between the victim's family and the Lapeer County Prosecutor's Office.

Testimony from the trial showed that Soares drank with co-workers at a bar in Warren and drove more than 50 miles before running a stop sign and slamming into and killing William Day at Lake Pleasant Rd and M-90 in North Branch Twp. Witness testimony said that Soares approached the intersection and stop sign at a high rate of speed and never hit the brakes as he drove through the stop sign. Expert witnesses for both the prosecution and defense said that he was traveling anywhere from 55-75mph. The victim was coming through the intersection on his motorcycle at that time and tried to stop but could not avoid the crash. Both vehicles caught fire and were badly damaged as they traveled 50-200 feet from impact.

Soares attempted to downplay his poor driving record during his testimony at trial but evidence from the prosecution showed that he had 6 speeding tickets within 6 years and the last ticket came just two weeks before the deadly crash.

“The decision by Matthew Soares to drink and drive on the evening of August 19, 2004 cost another man his life and Soares his freedom,” said Genesee County Prosecutor David Leyton after a Lapeer County jury came back with the guilty verdict after just 55 minutes of deliberations.

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