



January 4, 2023

For Immediate Release
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**SPARTA MAN SENTENCED TO LIFE IMPRISONMENT
PLUS 120 YEARS FOR 2021 AXE ATTACK**

[SPARTA WI] Monroe County District Attorney Kevin D. Croninger announced that on January 4, 2023, thirty-eight-year-old Thomas Aspseter of Sparta was sentenced to serve life in prison without the possibility of release followed by an additional 120 years in prison. The sentence was handed down by Monroe County Circuit Court Judge Todd L. Ziegler.

Aspseter was previously convicted in September 2022 of first degree intentional homicide, two counts of attempted first degree intentional homicide, and two counts of aggravated battery following a five-day jury trial related to Aspseter's 2021 axe attack on his elderly grandfather, granduncle, and grandaunt.

Monroe County District Attorney Kevin Croninger and Assistant District Attorney (ADA) Sarah Skiles prosecuted the case. ADA Skiles asked Judge Ziegler to impose the maximum sentence citing the brutal and aggravated nature of the crime, the impact the crime has on the victims, and Aspseter's lack of remorse. In handing down Aspseter's sentence, Judge Ziegler observed the attack was "horrific" and was the most "vicious and aggravated" crime he has seen during his time as a judge. Following sentencing, ADA Skiles commented, "We are grateful for today's sentence. The victims in this case have suffered immensely. The sentence takes their suffering into account and ensures the defendant is not and will not be a threat to public safety."

This is the third life without parole sentence in Monroe County, following a conviction at jury trial, in the past eleven months. In addition to the sentencing of Thomas Aspseter, on February 22, 2022 Michael R. Hartmann was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of release for the shooting homicide of a Sparta man in June of 2020. On June 29, 2022 Marcus W. Anderson was sentenced to life in prison without release for the homicide of a three-year-old Tomah child in May, 2019. Commenting on the rarity of so many homicide trials in such a short period of time District Attorney Croninger stated, "It is extremely rare for Monroe County to have three 1st Degree Intentional Homicide trials in such a short period of time. All three of these cases were incredibly horrific and devastating. The investigation and prosecution of these cases has significantly taxed the outstanding professionals in law enforcement and in my office who have worked on these

matters. I am honored to work alongside such top notch professionals in achieving these results, more importantly I am thankful that the hard work of so many talented people has led to justice for the victims of these horrific and devastating crimes.”

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