



JACKSON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Friday, July 1, 2016

MURPHYSBORO MAN SENTENCED TO THE ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS FOR AGGRAVATED DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ALCOHOL AND AGGRAVATED DRIVING WHILE LICENSE REVOKED

Michael C. Carr, Jackson County State's Attorney, announced today that a Murphysboro resident, Michael T. Stephanidis, was sentenced to the Illinois Department of Corrections for Aggravated Driving Under the Influence and Aggravated Driving While License Revoked following a plea of guilty. Stephanidis was sentenced on Friday, July 1, 2016, to 8 years of incarceration for the Driving Under the Influence Charge followed by 2 years of incarceration for the Driving While License Revoked charge both to be followed by 3 years of mandatory supervised release. He will also be required to pay a fine of \$15,000.00 for the Aggravated Driving While Under the Influence.

On February 19, 2016, the Jackson County Sheriff's Department responded to a report of a suspicious vehicle on the side of Illinois Highway 51. The vehicle was located and a deputy began to investigate the situation. Two men were located with the vehicle, one in the front passenger seat and one attempting to hide from the police. Stephanidis was identified at the scene and showed numerous indicators of impairment, but at that time investigators were unable to determine who was driving the vehicle. Both men were injured with what appeared to be stab wounds and were taken to the Memorial Hospital of Carbondale for treatment. Upon further investigation, deputies obtained video surveillance from a local establishment that clearly showed Stephanidis getting into the driver's side of his company truck and driving out of the parking lot onto Illinois Highway 51 just moments before the call of a suspicious vehicle was received by dispatch. Once investigators were confident that Stephanidis was the driver, Stephanidis was charged with Aggravated Driving While Under the Influence, a Class X Felony. A warrant was issued for his arrest, he was apprehended and taken to the Jackson County Jail where he remained until he posted bond and was released on June 1, 2016.

On June 5, 2013, at approximately 11 p.m., officers from the Murphysboro Police Department responded to a report of a crash between an all-terrain vehicle (ATV) and a parked car. Officers arrived on scene and found the remnants of a crash where it appeared

an ATV had crashed into the back of a parked car. The car had severe damage to the rear bumper and back window. The ATV was located in the street as well with pieces of plastic and large puddles of liquid surrounding it. Witnesses at the scene told officers that the driver of the all-terrain vehicle flipped over the handle-bars of the ATV and landed on the back of the car. When he slid off the back of the car, he ran around frantically telling the witnesses he had lost his wallet. He eventually fled the scene on foot. Several personal items that belonged to the driver were found at the scene. Further investigation by Murphysboro Police Department yielded a video from a local convenience store filmed just moments before the crash in which Stephanidis was wearing the personal items left at the scene of the crash. There were also several other indicators as to Stephanidis being the driver of the ATV. He was charged with Aggravated Driving While License Revoked, a Class 4 Felony. A warrant was issued for his arrest, he was apprehended on June 9, and transported to the Jackson County Jail.

On July 1, 2016, Stephanidis agreed to plead guilty to both cases. He has been convicted of DUI on five occasions. The sentences will be served consecutive to one another. He is currently incarcerated in the Jackson County Jail awaiting transportation to the Illinois Department of Corrections.

The investigations were conducted by the Jackson County Sheriff's Department and the Murphysboro Police Department. Assistant State's Attorney Abigail Dinn was responsible for the prosecution of these cases.