

# Washington County NEWS

VOLUME 121, NUMBER 20

WASHINGTON COUNTY, ALABAMA 75 CENTS FRIDAY, MAY 24, 2013



## POW!

Dawgs unleash dominant defense in spring football romp over 3A Bayside Academy

TODAY IN SPORTS/1B

### JAMES BOOTH ABUSED CHILDREN

# Life, no parole for sex crimes

BY HANNAH GARCIA  
hannah@thecallnews.com

**CHATOM** — James Ryan Booth will spend the rest of his life in prison after pleading guilty to 11 sex-abuse charges and one drug charge earlier this year.

Bound in neon yellow handcuffs and wearing standard black-and-white stripes, Booth, 34, of Wagarville said little on Monday as Circuit Judge Robert Montgomery sentenced him to seven concurrent life sentences, five without the possibility of parole.

When asked if there was anything he would like to say to the court, Booth responded with a dry “no, sir” before Montgomery read him his fate.

Booth’s sentencing closed a sordid ordeal involving Booth and his common-law wife Julie Ann Reed Guy committing sex acts with their young children. Guy, 21, was also sen-



James Booth

tenced to life in prison in February after she entered blind pleas on multiple charges of sexual abuse of children under 12, production of pornography, sodomy and rape.

In stark contrast to Guy’s tearful apology during her sentencing, Booth was unemotional, sitting with his hands folded or adjusting his handcuffs and looking up routinely. Deputies sat Booth away from other prisoners in the courtroom before the sentencing. When Montgomery asked him if he understood his sentence, Booth answered with a simple “yes.”

Officials said the children involved were a

See **LIFE SENTENCE**, 4A

## Officials satisfied with outcome of ‘worst case’ of abuse they’ve seen

BY HANNAH GARCIA  
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Washington County officials say they are satisfied with the outcome of a child sex-abuse case that resulted in life sentences for a Wagarville couple.

James Ryan Booth, 34, and his common-law wife, Julie Ann Reed Guy, 21, both received life sentences for convictions on a combined 14 charges involving the first-degree rape and production of child pornography of three children. Both entered blind guilty pleas.

“I was pleased with the result,” District Attorney Spencer Walker said. “Mr. Booth received the maximum sentence of life with-



Julie Guy

out parole as far as the Class A felonies are concerned. He will never be able to abuse another child.”

Washington County Sheriff Richard Stringer also said he was satisfied with the outcome of what he called one of the worst cases of child sex abuse he has seen.

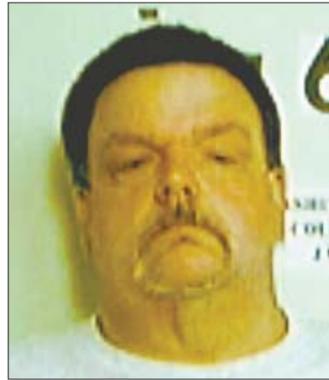
“I don’t know that we’ve seen anything as severe as this,” Stringer said. “As far as a failure of morality, this is probably the worst case I have ever seen, people abusing their own children. Everyone involved in this case

See **REACTION**, 4A

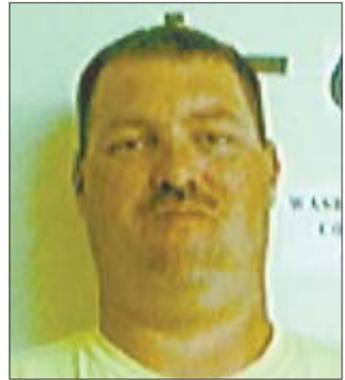
### AFTERMATH OF TUSSLE WITH MAYOR

# McIntosh fire chief arrested

Davidson and ambulance driver Rutledge turn themselves in after Dixon swears out warrants



Fire chief Robbie Davidson



Ambulance driver Ronnie Rutledge

Washington County Jail booking photos taken May 16

## Men released after posting bond

BY JASON BOOTHE AND HANNAH GARCIA  
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**MCINTOSH** — McIntosh Volunteer Fire Department chief Robbie Davidson and McIntosh Rescue Squad ambulance driver Ronnie Alan Rutledge turned themselves in on May 16 after Mayor Wilbert Dixon swore out arrest warrants against them for harassment after an altercation at a council meeting.

The meeting, which addressed alleged insubordinate acts by Davidson, devolved into a physical altercation between Dixon and Davidson at the May 14 McIntosh Town Council meeting.

Davidson, 49, of 274 Nicholas Road in McIntosh and Rutledge, 37, of 8360 H.F. Newburn Road in Citronelle were each booked into the Washington County Jail and charged with harassment. Each received a \$1,000 bond and was released from jail.

During the meeting, Dixon and Davidson were pulled apart by McIntosh officer Nick Reed before

Davidson fell and injured his leg and was transported to Mobile Infirmary.

The incident came after a discussion the council held during its regular meeting and then in executive session about Davidson approving repairs on equipment without getting the council’s permission, despite Dixon’s request to do so. The council gave Davidson an ultimatum: sign an agreement stating that he will resign if he commits another insubordinate act or the town would search for a new fire chief.

Dixon told the Washington County News on May 16 that he swore out arrest warrants against Davidson and Rutledge, “who threatened to burn my house down,” Dixon said.

Dixon said Davidson had until May 17 to sign the agreement. Davidson did not return phone messages left by the Washington County News for comment.

However, in a Facebook wall posting, Davidson said: “Well, I said

See **ARRESTED**, 3A

## McIntosh voting center move still focus of argument

BY JASON BOOTHE  
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**CHATOM** — The topic of moving a voting center from McIntosh High School to the volunteer firehouse remained contentious Tuesday when two Washington County commissioners asked the county school board for its

opinion.

Commissioners Willie Long, who favors the move, and Joe Abston, who opposes it, came to the board meeting to get input and found spirited agreement and spirited disapproval.

Long first brought up the idea because he thought having

thousands of people on campus to vote during school hours could present an increased threat to students. The Town of McIntosh has approved shifting the voting center from the high school to the firehouse, which is about a half-mile away. But school board member Dr. Fred Thomas said the

move would inconvenience blacks and that there was no need to do it because there are just as many safety concerns for students at a football game as there are on Election Day.

Superintendent Tim Savage said when former Probate Judge Charles Singleton approached

him about using the school for a voting center, he expressed safety concerns and was under the impression it was going to be a one-time occurrence until another suitable location was found.

“I still have safety concerns,”

See **VOTING**, 7A

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# AREA NEWS

## LIFE SENTENCE: James Ryan Booth has no chance of parole for convictions on sex abuse charges

FROM PAGE 1A

daughter under a year old, a female cousin who was 4 years old and a 6-year-old son.

- On a conviction for:
  - One count of production of child pornography, Booth was sentenced to life imprisonment.
  - Two counts of sexual abuse of a child less than 12 years old, Booth was sentenced to two 20-year terms for each count.
  - One count of incest, Booth was sentenced to 10 years in prison.
  - Two counts of first-degree rape, Booth was sentenced to two life terms without the possibility of parole.
  - Three counts of first-degree sodomy, Booth was sentenced to three life terms without the possibility of parole.
  - One count of pornography involving a parent and minor, Booth was sentenced to life imprisonment.
  - One count for possession of child pornography, Booth was sentenced to

five years in prison.

■ One count of unlawful manufacture of a controlled substance, Booth was sentenced to 20 years in prison. All sentences are to run concurrently, Montgomery said. Booth and Guy were arrested in March 2012 at their Wagarville home after Washington County Sheriff's deputies were alerted to the sex crimes by the Washington County Department of Human Resources, which in turn had been informed by a concerned citizen, according to chief deputy Ferrell Grimes. Guy was sentenced to life in prison on two counts of production of obscene matter, two counts of first-degree rape, two counts of first-degree sodomy and one count of permitting or allowing a child to participate in the production of obscene matter. Guy also received 20 years each on three counts of sexual abuse of a child under 12 (to run concurrently with the life sentences), five years for

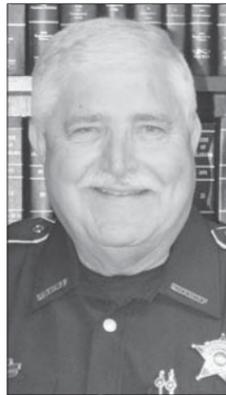
one count of incest (to run consecutively), and five years for one count of possession of obscene matter (to run concurrently). Current guidelines make Guy eligible for parole at some point due to her age. At Guy's sentencing, Washington County District Attorney Spencer Walker entered into evidence a disc that he said had been prepared by the Alabama Department of Forensic Science and which contained all the videos showing Guy engaged in acts she was eventually charged with. The evidence was seized when Guy and Booth were arrested, and Walker requested that it be sealed. Prosecutors at Booth's hearing also entered the disc into evidence and requested that it be sealed due to the graphic nature of the images and the ages of the victims. Booth has the right to appeal within 42 days of his sentencing, Montgomery said.

## REACTION: Officials satisfied with outcome of cases

FROM PAGE 1A

suffered." Walker expressed a similar sentiment, saying that since he started with the DA's office in 1989 as an investigator, this case is "by far the worst example (of child sex abuse) I've seen in all those years." "All are terrible, but this was certainly one of the more extreme ones I have seen," Walker said. On several of the charges, Booth was sentenced to life without the possibility of parole while Guy's age leaves open the possibility of parole. Federal authorities are considering bringing charges against Guy, according to Spencer. Stringer said that Guy has already been transferred to a state prison after being sentenced in February and Booth will be transported sometime this week. "It's sad to say, but in most instances people who are eligible for parole are paroled," Walker said. "I really don't think they (the Board of Pardons and Paroles) will grant parole to her based on the facts of this case if they look at it carefully. But you never know." "The thing to remember, this wasn't just one child. There were three children that we know of, that we have video evidence of them being abused," Walker added. "I think they (Booth and Guy) were predatory, and I hope they never have the opportunity to do it again." Walker said a young girl who had been babysitting for Guy asked to use Bluetooth to move some songs

from Guy's phone to her own and in the process transferred a video that detailed some of the abuse and was later used as evidence against Guy. "This young lady was brave for a girl that age. She really held it together in a difficult situation. She didn't let on and she waited until she could tell her parents," Walker said. After warrants were issued, officials from the Department of Human Resources, the DA's office and the sheriff's office collected digital evidence from cell phones, computers and a thumb drive that detailed the sexual abuse. That evidence was sent to the Alabama Computer Forensics Lab in Hoover, Walker said. In a rare move, Walker called the grand jury back into session to consider the evidence for indicting Booth and Guy. "That's the first time I've done that as district attorney," Walker said. "I felt there needed to be expedited action." The couple was indicted and arraigned before entering blind pleas, meaning no bargain was on the table in exchange for admitting guilt, Walker said. Guy and her defense attorney alleged that Guy fell under the influence of Booth, but Walker said he was not



Sheriff Richard Stringer

sure that was the case. "Honestly, I don't think that the evidence that we extracted substantiated that claim. It looked like both were, for lack of a better term, willing participants just from the video evidence," Walker said. "They both claimed they were under the influence of methamphetamine at the time, and that may have been the case. However, I have prosecuted by now hundreds of people who have been methamphetamine addicts. I've even been present when doors were kicked in, and in most of those cases those people still have the instinct to protect their own child. In this case, that didn't seem to be present." Despite his stoic demeanor during his sentencing on Monday, Walker said Booth seemed remorseful during the interview with police after his arrest and cried during questioning. "I have not experienced a case where the child has been so young in this area. I don't recall there being a case with an infant," Walker said. "I would say it ranks up at the top as far as depravity is concerned." Stringer said sex abuse of children is rare in the area, and he has not seen any sympathy for the couple from the public. "The more severe the punishment, the better," Stringer said.

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