Sex offender sentenced to more than 16 years

Thrice-tried John Richard Davis receives punishment for abusing girl

JESSICA PROKOP
The News-Review

A former Roseburg man convicted of sexually abusing a girl he knew for more than a decade was sentenced Thursday in Douglas County Circuit Court to more than 16½ years in prison.

John Richard Davis, 49, of Peoria, Arizona, had little to say before Circuit Court Judge Bill Marshall handed down the sentence.

"At this moment, I don't know what to say. I don't know what to think about the whole thing," he said.

A jury last week found Davis guilty of two counts of first-degree rape, a Measure 11 crime with a mandatory minimum sentence of 8 years and 4 months in prison.

Davis

Deputy District Attorney Kathleen Johnson asked the court to sentence Davis to consecutive sentences, arguing the victim was repeatedly abused and has waited the last 10 years for justice.

Davis' Eugene defense attorney, David Hill, objected and argued the jury did not make a clear finding that the counts were based on separate incidents.

Marshall said the jury had made the distinction in its verdict and granted the extended sentence.

Besides spending 16 years and 8 months in prison, Davis must register as a sex offender for life and provide a blood sample to test for sexually transmitted diseases. He was also sentenced to 20 years of post-prison supervision for each count.

Jurors, who deliberated for nearly four hours Friday, were unable to reach a verdict on another count of first-degree rape and one count of first-degree sodomy.

Johnson said Thursday the state would dismiss those charges. Johnson said the longer sentence was important because of the length of time the girl has suffered.

"You can never make a victim whole in a case like this, and I'm satisfied that this is the best we could have done," she said.

Davis was accused of abusing the girl between the 1990s and early 2000s, when she was a child, pre-teen and teenager.

A cousin said the victim was unable to attend the sentencing because she was sick and lives outside the area. The cousin read a statement on behalf of the victim and her family.

"It has taken over 10 years for Mr. Davis to be held accountable. Even though this chapter of (the victim's) life is coming to a close, the impact will stay with her for the rest of her life," it read. "We hope Mr. Davis will use his time in prison to reflect on what he's done."

Davis, who had been out of custody since July 7, 2006, was tried three times before being found guilty. He stood trial in February, but jurors were unable to reach a verdict then.

He first went on trial in 2008, but it was halted when a judge ruled prosecutors couldn't use as evidence online messages and phone calls between Davis and the victim.

Roseburg police staged and eavesdropped on the conversations, despite warnings from Davis' attorney that he wouldn't talk to police without a lawyer present. The Court of Appeals upheld the ruling, but the Oregon Supreme Court ruled in 2011 that suspects are only shielded from police questioning without a lawyer if they are in custody.

The defense argued during the trial the allegations against Davis were false and that the girl lashed out at him because he disciplined her for acting rebellious and sneaking out at night.

The victim's cousin said after the sentencing she is grateful Davis will have to register as a sex offender.

"I think it was the best outcome we could have had, considering," she said. "He will forever be held accountable for what he's done."

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AROUND THE UMPQUA

DOUGLAS COUNTY

Kids can access digital books

County children can now access online library myON.com for free this summer.

The service has a library of more than 4,000 digital books that can be searched by topic and age level. Many of the titles have audio narration, an embedded dictionary and highlighting capabilities. Books can be read on computers and tablets and downloaded for offline reading using free mobile apps.

Educators report that summer reading helps students keep skills sharp and subject matter fresh.

A free trial of the service is being offered to Oregon children and is hosted locally by the Douglas Education Service District. To access the service, log in using school name "Douglas ESD," user name "read" and password "read."

Website: myON.com.

ELKTON

Weight room to be dedicated

Elkton High School will soon have a new weight room at a house adjoining the school, 749 W. River Drive.

The Reser Family Foundation contributed $20,000 to the project and the Elkton School Board contributed $30,000. Community members donated workout machines to fill the weight room. The school will host an opening ceremony at 1 p.m. July 10 to celebrate the completion of construction.

Community members will be able to use the facility outside of school hours with a one-time purchase of a $25 swipe card.

Superintendent Mike Hughes said he plans to purchase free weights, kettle bells, a flat-screen TV and other equipment for the weight room from the Reser and school board contributions.

Information: 541-584-2228.

DOUGLAS COUNTY

Hosts sought for foreign students

World Heritage is looking for Douglas County residents to host high school students from Europe for a one-year exchange program.

Students from Russia, Ukraine, Moldova, Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and other countries will spend an academic year in the United States.

The program seeks to foster democracy and give students a better understanding of America.

Couples, single parents and families with and without children are encouraged to host.

Information: 800-888-9040 or whhosts.com.

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RIDDLE SAWDUST JUBILEE

Pug takes the gold

MIKE HENNEKE/News-Review photos

Hendrix the pug slips out to an early lead in a dog race Thursday. The event was part of the three-day Riddle Sawdust Jubilee.

Coty Franklin places Hendrix into position at the starting gates Thursday in Riddle.

Ruby looks up at her owner from the starting gates at the race Thursday in Riddle. Ruby won the race last year, but gave way to Hendrix, in the background, this year.

Borrowed dog entered under phony name wins; fun continues today

MEGAN CAMPBELL
The News-Review

RIDDLE — He didn't need treats. He didn't need someone to run alongside him. He just ran.

Last-minute entry "Ralf," a pug whose actual name is Hendrix, won the chewable toothbrush and Nutro crunchy dog treats in the Riddle dog race.

The small dogs pet race Thursday in the Riddle Fire Department's parking lot was part of the three-day Riddle Sawdust Jubilee, a community-wide celebration of Independence Day.

Coty Franklin entered Hendrix, his neighbor's dog, under the name Ralf. Franklin didn't know the dog's name prior to the competition.

Hendrix' owner, Daniel Sheets, arrived shortly before the nine-slot starting gate opened for the first round. Sheets was not aware his wife had given Franklin permission to take the dog.

"I thought he ran down here, barking at people," Sheets said. "But I got here at the right time."

If you go ...

Today's highlights at the Riddle Sawdust Jubilee:

10 a.m. — Outhouse races downtown

11 a.m. — Parade starts at Riddle Elementary School

Noon — Riddle Volunteer Fire District and Ladies Fire Auxiliary's annual firemen's barbecue

2 p.m. — Cribbage at City Hall

3 p.m. — Firemen's auction at fire hall

7 p.m. — The Eddy Ross Band at high school football field

10 p.m. — Fireworks at high school football field

Sheets ran to the other end of the lot and called for Hendrix to come. Leaving the gate, the pug sped past all other contestants.

Pets ran toward a line of clapping owners, with onlookers crowded in the background. Sheets jumped into the air and shouted "Whoo!" when Hendrix crossed the finish line.

Three-year-old Hendrix competed against last year's champion, Ruby.

"Ruby has come to defend her title," said owner Jennifer Merrick.

Merrick's husband, Mark, held treats in front of Ruby as he ran beside her. The Merricks hoped the 12- or 13-year-old doxie mix would take home first place again.

Though she didn't win, she wasn't one of the dogs that failed to leave the starting gate.

"They decided they liked their little home in there," said Riddle Jubilee Chairwoman Joyce Collins.

Collins, who included the race at last year's celebration for the first time, loves this event.

"It's just too hilarious," she said. "It's almost funnier to watch the people than the dogs."

More than 30 people wandered into the parking lot to watch the race.

Competing breeds ranged from wiener dogs to terrier mixes. They raced two rounds, Hendrix winning both.

Collins gathered this year's and last year's winning parties for a picture afterward.

"Ralf is (Hendrix') middle name now," Sheets told his neighbor, both smiling for the photo.

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