



Saint Louis County

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NEWS RELEASE

State of Minnesota v. Joseph John Couture, Jr. and the death of Trina Louise Langenbrunner

DATE 07/26/13

Contact: Jessica Smith, Assistant St. Louis County Attorney

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Today, in an appearance before the Honorable Dale O. Harris, in District Court, Joseph John Couture, Jr., pled guilty to charges of intentional murder in the second degree, aiding and abetting aggravated witness tampering in the first degree, and aiding and abetting arson in the first degree. Under oath, Defendant Couture admitted to murdering Trina Louise Langenbrunner on September 3, 2000. He also admitted that following his arrest he directed his girlfriend, Sandra Couture, to threaten critical witnesses and to commit arson in an effort to dissuade the murder prosecution witnesses.

The sentences immediately imposed today totaled 39.3 years in prison. Sandra Couture had previously entered her pleas of guilty to aiding and abetting aggravated witness tampering in the first degree and aiding and abetting arson in the first degree in April of this year and was sentenced to 9½ years in prison. Both of these cases were prosecuted by Assistant St. Louis County Attorneys Jessica Smith and Jon Holets.

The St. Louis County Attorney's Office credits the unwavering commitment of law enforcement in the successful prosecution of this case. The St. Louis County Sheriff's Office and Bureau of Criminal Apprehension are to be commended for a job well done. Their compassionate perseverance ensured a just conclusion for this family and the community.

Our hearts go out to the family and friends of Trina Langenbrunner whose lives have been forever altered. It is our hope that this plea and sentencing will, in some small way, bring closure and healing to Trina's family, friends, and the entire community.

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