

Man gets five years to serve for brutal, unprovoked beating in Spotsylvania

Keith Epps

Nov 19, 2019

A young Spotsylvania County man who brutally beat and severely injured another man for no apparent reason more than three years ago was ordered Tuesday to serve five years in prison.

Michael Andrew Teal, 23, had previously been convicted in Spotsylvania Circuit Court of unlawful wounding and two counts of failing to appear in court. He was sentenced to a total of seven years, with two years suspended.

Judge Ricardo Rigual's sentence was above the recommended state sentencing guidelines. "The viciousness of this attack cannot be understated," Rigual said. "It was a brutal attack without justification."

According to court records, Shawn Twyner went to a home in the 9800 block of Red Hill Road in Spotsylvania on March 8, 2016, to pick up a longtime friend. Twyner didn't remember much after knocking on the door and was found in poor condition by the friend.

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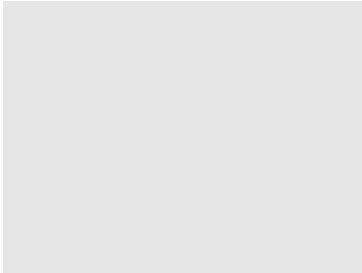
He was rushed to Mary Washington Hospital and then VCU Medical Center in Richmond to be treated for injuries that included a fractured jaw, a fractured left orbital bone and head trauma. Prosecutor Stephanie Fitzgerald said Tuesday that Twyner had his jaw wired shut, lost some vision in one eye and still needs additional surgeries.

The Spotsylvania Sheriff's Office wasn't notified about the attack until nearly a year later, when a deputy was sent to talk to Twyner on Feb. 21, 2017. When asked why he waited so long to report it, court records state, Twyner said he'd been going through a rough recovery.

Detective Earle Swift took over the investigation and identified Teal as the suspect. One witness told Swift that Teal told her that he was drinking and using drugs prior to the attack and thought “they” were going to get some money from the victim. No one else was arrested in connection with the attack.

Defense attorney Susan Fremit asked Rigual to sentence Teal within the guidelines. She said Teal is young enough to turn his life around and had already taken a life-skills course while in jail.

She also said that some of Teal’s issues stem from being sexually abused as a child.



Teal

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