

# Multiple Charges Against Chris Hyden In Big Stone County Court Trial Now On

By The Northern Star staff

*The Northern Star of Clinton, Minnesota*

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The trial for Christopher Hyden, 29, accused of attacking a woman in Clinton and her then-six year old daughter in August 2008, began in Big Stone County Court in Ortonville Friday, August 14 - one year later. The trial, which had been moved to Kandiyohi County Court by the judge, was moved back to Big Stone County when Hyden waived his right to a jury trial.

Hyden, who has been held in the Kandiyohi County since the incident, is being represented by defense lawyers Kent Marshall of Barrett and Tim Johnson of Willmar, while Matthew Frank, Assistant Attorney General for the State of Minnesota, is working with Big Stone County Attorney William Watson on the prosecution of the case. The judge hearing the case is Judge Michael Thompson.

Hyden faces multiple charges of first-degree attempted murder and first-degree criminal sexual conduct.

On Friday, Patty Stangeland, Big Stone County Dispatcher, was called to the stand by the prosecution to present in detail the three 911 calls that came into the dispatch that day, regarding the incident.

Following her testimony, the prosecution called Orie Oksendahl,

Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension in Moorhead. She stated she was in charge of collecting items from the victims at a Fargo, ND hospital after they were transported there. She had taken pictures of the victims' injuries, as well.

General Agent Ken McDonald, Bureau of Criminal Apprehension, Alexandria, testified that he had received a call about 7 p.m. asking for assistance. Representatives from that office had photos of Hyden at the Ortonville Hospital and also aerial photographs of the area in and around Clinton the day of the attack. These photographs were used throughout the questioning of witness throughout Monday, as well.

The trial resumed Monday at 9 a.m. with the prosecution reviewing the charges, and calling the

adult victim to the stand. She answered questions relating to the incident, and presented her testimony as to what had happened on August 1, 2008.

She stated that her two children had enjoyed riding with Hyden, an acquaintance, on his 4-wheeler, so it was not unusual for them to want a ride. When Hyden returned with the boy, her daughter also requested a ride. When Hyden returned to the house, he stated the little girl was out in the yard playing. At that time the mother was attacked, as he stabbed her several times, as well as cutting her throat, she stated.

She went on to tell of the assistance she received from people who were at a church function, ambulance transport and hospitalization.

Following the victim's testimony, her young daughter was questioned by the prosecution, and did acknowledge that it was Hyden who brought her to the fairgrounds, where the alleged attack on the child took place.

Witnesses who were "present last August, at the home, as well as those who were at the church across the street, assisted at the scene or saw Hyden leave on a 4-wheeler, were called to the stand for testimony and questions throughout the day Monday. Hyden was identified as the driver of the 4-wheeler by those who were called to testify, as they pointed to him from the witness stand.

According to Big Stone County Attorney the trial is expected to go through the end of the week, and could be concluded on Monday.

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## Big Stone County man who raped 6-year-old, slashed her throat then stabbed the girl's mother facing life in prison

ORTONVILLE — A Clinton man faces life in prison without parole after being found guilty of four of five charges stemming from an attack on a local woman and her daughter and the sexual assault of the young girl.

By: Terry O'Keefe, West Central Tribune

ORTONVILLE — A Clinton man faces life in prison without parole after being found guilty of four of five charges stemming from an attack on a local woman and her daughter and the sexual assault of the young girl.

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Christopher Hyden, 29, was found guilty Wednesday in Big Stone County by Judge Michael Thompson of the most serious of the charges, first-degree criminal sexual conduct for raping the then-6-year-old girl a year ago in Clinton. The ruling came after closing arguments were presented Monday following five days of witness testimony.

Hyden was acquitted of first-degree attempted murder involving the girl, but was convicted of second-degree attempted murder for slashing her throat after the sexual assault. He was also convicted of first-degree and second-degree attempted murder for the attack on the mother, 27-year-old Dawn Boyle, in her home following the rape.

Boyle had her throat slashed twice and was stabbed in the abdomen at least four times during the attack Aug. 1 of last year.

The case was prosecuted by Big Stone County Attorney Bill Watson and Assistant Attorney Gene Matthew Frank. Defense lawyers were Kent Marshall and Tim Johnson.

In his closing argument Monday, Frank said the case included heinous acts involving the rape of girl, which created the potential for a greater sentence if convicted. Marshall argued against that notion, saying what Frank presented as heinous acts were actually just elements of the crimes themselves. Hyden never denied committing the attacks following his arrest a couple hours afterward or during his trial and made statements indicating his guilt, according to testimony.

Watson said the judge in his ruling did find two heinous elements in the sexual assault of the girl - intentionally inflicting great bodily harm and exposing her to extreme inhumane conditions. During the trial, Frank said Hyden took the girl to the fairgrounds in Clinton on an ATV, raped her behind a berm at the race track, slit her throat and left her for dead.

Watson said the Minnesota Legislature in recent years passed the statute relating to heinous elements in a crime that can increase the sentence.

"Because of the two heinous elements relating to the criminal sexual conduct, that could mean life without parole," Watson said. "That would be the presumptive sentence."

Watson said the judge also found aggravating factors involving the attacks on both victims.

"We felt the crimes deserved the most serious outcome and that's what the court decided," Watson said. "We're very happy with the outcome."

At times since his arrest, Hyden has claimed he heard voices directing him to make the attacks, but he also made statements indicating he was angered at the time by pending charges against him relating to an alleged sexual assault of a child earlier in 2008.

He was quoted as saying, "You get what you ask for," and "If they want a monster, I'll give them one," preceding the attacks and after his arrest.

Watson said he expects formal sentencing to take place in October. Hyden remains jailed in Willmar.