



U.S. Department of Justice

Ronald C. Machen Jr.
*United States Attorney for the
District of Columbia*

*Judiciary Center
555 Fourth St. N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20530*

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, January 14, 2011

For Information Contact:

Public Affairs

(202) 252-6933

http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/dc/Press_Releases/index.html

Sisters Sentenced to Prison Terms for Beating Incident - One Used a Metal Pole, Another Used a Golf Club in Attack -

WASHINGTON - Jennifer Clark, 28, and her sister, Crystal Clark, 32, were each sentenced to four years of incarceration today on charges stemming from the unprovoked August 2009 beating of a woman, her fiancé, and her family in the Woodlands neighborhood of Southeast Washington, U.S. Attorney Ronald C. Machen Jr. announced.

The sisters were convicted in November 2010 by a jury in the Superior Court of the District of Columbia of assault with a dangerous weapon, carrying a dangerous weapon, felony destruction of property, and simple assault. Crystal Clark also was convicted of a charge of cruelty to children.

They were sentenced by the Honorable Judge Anthony C. Epstein, who cited the severity and nature of the crimes. Judge Epstein also ordered that the women be placed on three years of supervised release upon completion of the prison terms.

A third co-defendant, Dewey Whitfield, 49, was convicted in the same trial of aggravated assault while armed, assault with a dangerous weapon, and carrying a dangerous weapon; he will be sentenced on February 3, 2011. Four additional co-defendants, who were charged with misdemeanor offenses, are scheduled to go to trial on March 25, 2011.

The government's evidence at trial established that on August 25, 2009 in the 2700 block of Langston Place SE, Jennifer Clark and Canzetta Jackson got into an argument regarding Ms. Jackson's daughter, who had recently run away from home. At the end of the argument, both women went their separate ways. Several hours later, Jennifer Clark—still angry about the previous confrontation—gathered a large group of people in front of Ms. Jackson's house and helped distribute weapons to several people while they waited for Ms. Jackson to come home.

When Ms. Jackson arrived home shortly after 9 p.m., Jennifer Clark, Crystal Clark, and several other people confronted her and her fiancé, Andrew Smith, who was standing with her,

and blocked their entrance to their house.

Jennifer Clark, who was holding a golf club, then swung it at Ms. Jackson's head, sparking an enormous melee that resulted in Ms. Jackson's being beaten severely by Jennifer Clark, Crystal Clark, and others while on the ground, Mr. Smith's being hit in the head and knocked unconscious by co-defendant Dewey Whitfield, and Ms. Jackson's then-11- and 12-year-old daughters being struck with a metal pole by Crystal Clark as they tried to help their mother.

After the fight ended and the victims were back inside their house, Jennifer Clark and Crystal Clark broke out the windows in the family's two vehicles. Later that night and again the next day, Crystal Clark approached a nearby family that had called 911 to report the beating and threatened them with physical violence for having called the police.

In announcing the sentence, U.S. Attorney Machen praised the outstanding work of those who worked on the case from the Metropolitan Police Department, including Detective Joseph Belfiore and Officers Steven Murphy, Konrad Olszak, and Benjamin Fink. He also praised the work of Assistant U.S. Attorney Muiyiwa Bamiduro, who investigated and indicted the case, and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Justin Dillon and John Truong, who prosecuted the case at trial.

11-015

###