

TRI-CITY HERALD

Child rapist's request for new Benton County trial is denied

Published: March 13, 2013

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A convicted child rapist, who was confident he'd get a new Benton County trial that would lead to different results, lost his appeal Tuesday.

The Washington Court of Appeals handed down its decision affirming Bob Trainor's convictions for two counts of second-degree rape of a child, and one count each of first-degree rape of a child and first- and third-degree child molestation.

The Benton City man is serving a minimum term of 23 years and four months. He currently is at Coyote Ridge Corrections Center in Connell.

His ultimate release is up to the state's Indeterminate Sentence Review Board based on his participation in treatment programs while in prison and any further risk to the community.

Trainor, 49, is an ex-Marine who worked at Hanford for 21 years and was a volunteer captain with Benton Fire District 1.

He repeatedly told the court he didn't do what he'd been accused of -- sexually abusing five girls. The abuse, which occurred over nine years, began when the youngest of the victims was about 7.

All five girls testified before a Benton County Superior Court jury in August 2010.

The sexual abuse was revealed earlier that year after the mother of one girl found a suicide note that the girl had written. In that note, the girl said Trainor had sexually assaulted her.

The other victims then came forward.

Trainor was a trusted adult to the girls.

Deputy Prosecutor Anita Petra said Tuesday she's thrilled for the five girls that they don't have to go through another trial since it was such a difficult case for them.

"This is one step closer to closure for (the victims), and I'm extremely happy with the holdings of the court in this case," Petra told the Herald.

Trainor's appellate attorney, Cassandra Lopez de Arriaga of Everett, said in 2010 that Trainor was in "great spirits," and that "even though the justice system did not serve him well" he was confident about the appeal.

Kennewick lawyer Larry Stephenson had supported Trainor's claim that he was ineffective at trial, and let Lopez de Arriaga handle sentencing for the defense.

A three-judge appellate panel said there is no evidence to show that Stephenson failed to properly represent Trainor in his week-long trial. The panel also determined there is no merit to Trainor's claims of prosecutorial misconduct by Petra or errors by Judge Vic VanderSchoor in trial.

Trainor's appeal attacked the trial court for rejecting his request for a new trial, but the Court of Appeals' opinion said VanderSchoor didn't abuse his discretion and correctly denied the request.

"There was sufficient evidence to support the verdict and therefore Mr. Trainor did not demonstrate a ground for arrest of judgment (under the law)," the opinion said.