

LILLY MASSENGALE FOUND NOT GUILTY IN ALDERDICE BREAK-IN

A Pulaski Circuit Court jury has returned a not guilty verdict for Somerset resident, Lilly Massengale, in connection with an April 2007 break-in at the home of Dr. Ben Alderdice. The six-man, six-woman jury brought in its verdict after nearly four hours of deliberations.

Massengale (50) was acquitted of charges of Complicity to Burglary in the First Degree, Complicity to Theft by Unlawful Taking >\$500, and Complicity to Theft by Unlawful Taking of Firearms. The Somerset firm of Stanziano & Catron, PSC represented Ms. Massengale with both Mark Stanziano and Bethany Catron handling the trial. The Commonwealth was represented by Assistant Commonwealth's Attorney, Jeremy Bartley.

"Ms. Massengale is ecstatic," said Stanziano, "She has maintained all along that she had no connection with the break-in or thefts." The jury verdict ends a four-year ordeal for Ms. Massengale which, according to her attorneys, has taken a toll on her life. "Ms. Massengale had to place a hold on parts of her life while this crime was sorted out. Now that her freedom has been unconditionally restored by the jury's verdict, Lilly will be able to get back to her passions for travel with friends, marketing, and cooking for loved ones," said Catron.

According to Stanziano, the prosecution claimed Massengale, who was Alderdice's girlfriend at the time, was the ring leader of a group of five people who entered the Alderdice residence, opening one safe and removing a second. They stole cash, bonds, firearms, coins, knives and jewelry totaling over \$1,000,000. Massengale's car was also taken and later burned. The bonds were recovered in 2009, but the total loss for the property not recovered was still over \$100,000.

Two of the burglars, David Morris and Gene Parrigin have since died. The remaining two burglars, Scott Hurt and Massengale's brother, Danny Sweet, had previously pled guilty to burglary charges in the Pulaski Circuit Court and received 10 and 12-year sentences, respectively. Both Hurt and Sweet testified against Massengale at trial saying she planned the crimes and recruited them to participate.

"There is no way, of course, to know exactly why the jury reached the verdict it did," said Stanziano. "But, I believe that the inability of any two witnesses for the prosecution to tell the same story likely had something to do with it. The defense called no witnesses of its own, relying, as Catron put it, "on Mark's cross-examination of Dr. Alderdice and the thieves, drug dealers, and addicts the prosecution called to the stand."

"This verdict was a result of everyone in the firm working closely together with our client and her supporters for well over a year," said Stanziano. "It was a lot of work but, in the end, it paid off. We are all very happy with the result."