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Men get 15 years in Sandstrom, Sawyer arsons

BY MELISSA MCKEON MMCKEON@HOLDENLANDMARK.COM

Citing their "random, reckless and unnerved acts of violent evil," their lack of remorse, and the unlikelihood of rehabilitation, Judge John S. McCann sentenced two 30-year-old Clinton men to 15 years in state prison on Nov. 23 for arson that destroyed the Mary Elizabeth Sawyer homestead in Sterling and part of the Sandstrom family barn in Holden, both in August 2007.

Michael P. Dreslinski and John D. Rousseau, both 30, were found guilty in separate trials in October and November of setting those fires as well as two others that destroyed a vacant paper mill in Erving and a railroad shed in Florida, Mass.

McCann read several lengthy lists of prior convictions of both men, who have records extending back to the age of 17, stating that, when they were convicted on previous offenses and were on probation, they inevitably violated probation and ended up serving time.

"Each thought 'impunity' their middle name," McCann said of the two. "It is no longer."

McCann also said neither man shows a propensity for rehabilitation.

The sentence of 10 years for the Sterling fire and then five years for the Holden fire, along with 15 years of probation during their sentence and 15 years after, McCann said, would have the men released when they are 45, a time when many criminals' illegal activity usually diminishes. They will be on probation until the age of 60, and beginning their probation while they are serving their sentences is meant to prevent the behavior that is restricted during probation from going on during their incarceration.

The records of the case are impounded, McCann said, in order to prevent improper use of the information about anyone connected with the case by the defendants' families or friends.

The two have also been accused of collecting information about police officers in order to threaten and harass them; Dreslinski is also said to have threatened a fellow inmate who testified against him.

Their list of probation restrictions is lengthy, as well; the two were known for impersonating police, acquiring police paraphernalia, and harassing police, activities effectively banned by probation, which restricts them from using any such materials, as well as restricting their computer use to any employment time; they are banned from posting on social networks.

They were also ordered to make financial restitution of any uninsured losses.

But no dollar figure, McCann said, can compensate the victims for the stress of the

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