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PRESS RELEASE

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JURY FINDS MORTON MAN GUILTY OF ASSAULT IN THE SECOND DEGREE

A Redwood County District Court jury found a Morton man guilty of Assault in the Second Degree, County Attorney Jenna Peterson announced Friday.

The jury deliberated for approximately an hour Wednesday evening, October 24, 2018, before delivering the guilty verdict around 6:30 p.m.

Ronald Wayne Pendleton, 50, was found guilty for the assault of a male victim that occurred on July 25, 2017 in the Lower Sioux Indian Community.

According to the criminal complaint, evidence and testimony presented at trial, the assault occurred on July 25, 2017 at the residence of the victim. Earlier in the day Pendleton and the victim had an altercation over an unpaid debt. Pendleton left the residence only to return later armed with a baseball bat. He admitted striking the victim with the bat, however, he claimed to have done so in self-defense. As a result of the hit, the victim suffered two fractures to the back of his skull and internal bleeding. Pendleton sustained no injuries in the assault. The jury rejected his self-defense claim.

“The law frowns on the use of force in self-defense, except as a last resort. Ronald Pendleton did the right thing the first time when he left the victim’s residence. He ran away from danger, which is what the law requires,” Assistant Redwood County Attorney Joe Sanow, who tried the case, told the jury in his closing arguments Wednesday afternoon. “Pendleton could have and should have avoided the danger by staying home, by calling the police, by taking any sort of action other than going out there a second time armed with a weapon and looking for a fight.”

Pendleton will be sentenced December 3rd at the Redwood County Courthouse.