

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Wednesday, August 17, 2016

## **Cherokee Co. Man Sentenced To More Than Seven Years In Prison On Federal Assault Charges**

ASHEVILLE, N.C. – U.S. District Judge Martin Reidinger sentenced late yesterday Lowney Yohnagalegi Crow, 33, of Cherokee, N.C. to 87 months in prison on charges of assault resulting in serious bodily injury, announced Jill Westmoreland Rose, U.S. Attorney for the Western District of North Carolina. Judge Martin Reidinger also ordered Crow, who is an enrolled member of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, to serve three years under court supervision after he is released from prison.

U.S. Attorney Rose is joined in making today's announcement by John A. Strong, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), Charlotte Division, and Chief James Dike Sneed of the Cherokee Indian Police Department (CIPD).

“Crow’s then-fiancé suffered unspeakable violence by the man who claimed to love her. Crow beat his victim as she begged him to stop, telling her his intent was to make sure she never walked again. Then afterwards, Crow left the victim to suffer in pain overnight, finally agreeing to call for medical help after he instructed her on what to say about the cause of her injuries,” said U.S. Attorney Rose. “What Crow did to his victim is what millions of others suffer each day: domestic violence and physical, emotional, and psychological abuse at the hands of a loved one. Domestic violence can happen to anyone regardless of race, age, sexual orientation, ethnicity, religion, or gender, and it affects people of all socioeconomic backgrounds and education. It can also happen to intimate partners who are married, living together, or dating. I urge victims of domestic violence to reach

out to my office, to law enforcement, to a local organization, or a loved one to alert them to their situation and to report this heinous crime. Help is available to assist domestic violence victims and to get them on a path to safety,” Rose added.

According to information contained in filed court documents and yesterday’s sentencing hearing, on March 30, 2014, officers with CIPD arrived to Crow’s residence in response to a 911 call regarding an attempted rape and assault at that location. The female victim, who was Crow’s fiancé at the time, told law enforcement officers that another individual had come into Crow’s house and attempted to sexually assault her. The officers found the alleged perpetrator laying on the floor inside Crow’s residence unconscious and in need of medical attention.

The following day, on March 31, 2014, the victim called 911 again, this time requesting transportation to the hospital because she was hurt. According to court records, at first, the victim declined to speak in detail to law enforcement and the emergency medical personnel on the scene regarding her severe injuries on her knees and abdomen. Crow also denied knowing who injured the victim when he was questioned. Court records show that later the same day and after Crow had left the hospital, the victim told law enforcement that Crow was the person who had assaulted her, after he accused her of being unfaithful to him. The victim told law enforcement that Crow had used a wooden baseball bat to hit her the night before, that the beating had lasted approximately 45 minutes, and that Crow only stopped hitting her when the bat he was using broke.

According to court records, the morning after the incident, Crow had carried the victim to the bathroom because she was unable to walk and finally agreed to get her medical attention for her injuries. Crow

also told the victim to tell the police that he was not responsible for her injuries. According to court records, the victim suffered multiple fractures in her legs, hands and other parts of her body. She also required several surgeries and physical therapy before she could walk again.

An arrest warrant against Crow was issued in January 2015, following the filing of a federal complaint against him. Crow was located in California where he was arrested in January 2016. He pleaded guilty in April 2016 to one count of intentional assault resulting in serious bodily injury. He is currently in federal custody and will be transferred to the custody of the Federal Bureau of Prisons upon designation of a federal facility. All federal sentences are served without the possibility of parole.

The investigation was handled by the FBI and CIPD. Assistant U.S. Attorney John Pritchard of the U.S. Attorney's Office in Asheville prosecuted the case.

If you or someone you know is the victim of domestic violence, please call the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-SAFE (7233), 1-800-787-3224 (TTY), or visit: <http://www.thehotline.org>[external link]