

# Jury finds Easton man not guilty of assaulting cop

By JANICE BLAKE  
Express staff writer

EASTON — It took a Northampton County jury less than an hour Thursday to decide that a city man was not guilty of assaulting an Easton police officer last year.

The jury of eight women and four men acquitted Russell Snyder, 34, of the 600 block of Ferry Street, of aggravated assault, resisting arrest and disorderly conduct.

Following the verdict, Judge James C. Hogan also found Snyder not guilty of harassment in connection with the same arrest.

On the first day of the trial Wednesday, Patrol Officer Michael Orchulli told the jury that he stopped his patrol car on Snyder's block about 11 p.m. June 2, 1989, because Snyder made an obscene gesture and yelled at

scenities at Orchulli. Patrol Officer Timothy Lambert, who arrived shortly after to assist, said he saw Snyder punch Orchulli in the face as Orchulli tried to arrest him.

But on Wednesday, several defense witnesses told the jury that Snyder did nothing before Orchulli got out of the car and approached.

Elizabeth Lozada, a former neighbor who now lives on North Fourth Street, said she was on her front porch when she saw Snyder talking to another neighbor.

"Then he started walking back toward his house and a police cruiser suddenly stopped," Lozada said.

Orchulli got out and pointed his finger in Snyder's face. Lozada said Snyder asked what he did wrong and Orchulli said he was under arrest.

ground real quickly," she said. Snyder was hunched on the ground and Orchulli had his arm around Snyder's neck, Lozada testified.

She said Snyder was "gasping for air" and trying to get Orchulli's hand off of his neck.

Orchulli then punched Snyder in the face, she said.

"I heard it (the punch)," Lozada testified.

Lambert arrived, handcuffed Snyder and Orchulli pulled Snyder up from the ground by his hair, Lozada said.

She recalled Orchulli saying, "Get the f--- up."

She said she didn't see Snyder do anything wrong before Orchulli stopped.

Dwayne Thornton, the neighbor Snyder spoke to that night, said he had gone into his house but came back outside when he noticed the police car's flashing lights. Snyder was on

the ground being arrested.

"When he got up, I heard him say, 'Why am I being arrested?'" Thornton said.

Snyder's son, 13-year-old Russell Jr., said he was inside watching a Phillies game on television when he heard "cursing" outside.

"I came out and seen 'im beating on my dad," the boy said. "My dad was on his knees."

Then, gesturing toward Orchulli, he said, "That guy right there punched him."

When he asked what was going on, he said, he was told by Lambert to "shut up" and go back in his house. Inside, he said, he watched from a window.

Orchulli punched his father three times — in the eye, jaw and side of the face, the boy said.

During his testimony Wednesday, Orchulli said Snyder had made obscene gestures toward him at least two times during the

but Orchulli had ignored them.

He also said Snyder approached him in the police parking lot once and asked him to summon former detective James Broscius because Snyder wanted to "kick his ass."

Although there was no direct testimony about it, it was suggested during the trial that there was some kind of ongoing disagreement between Snyder and Broscius, who resigned from the force last year.

Defense attorney Leonard Artigliere questioned why police prepared supplemental reports but never interviewed neighbors and other witnesses after Snyder complained about his treatment that night.

The jury was shown pictures taken several days after the arrest that showed Snyder had a

"FBI," some people speculated.  
"No," insisted others, "State police."

An Express reporter was slipped a note on her way out the door that said someone was going to get arrested that night.

Even Supervisor Ron Angle, who was unusually subdued, seemed to buy the law enforcement theory when he asked the mysterious stranger about police procedure.

"I'm just here to observe," the mystery man said.

Turns out the man was not FBI, state police or even liquor control board.

He was Paul Carpenter, a columnist with the Allentown Morning Call.

"It's happened before," he said Thursday when asked about the case of mistaken identity. "I don't do anything but take out my notebook. I have cousins who are police officers and they're bigger and meaner than I am."

BECKY SCHNUR

## Holiday in ice

EASTON — For the second consecutive year, Easton will enter the ice age on Dec. 14 and 15.

## AROUND TOWN

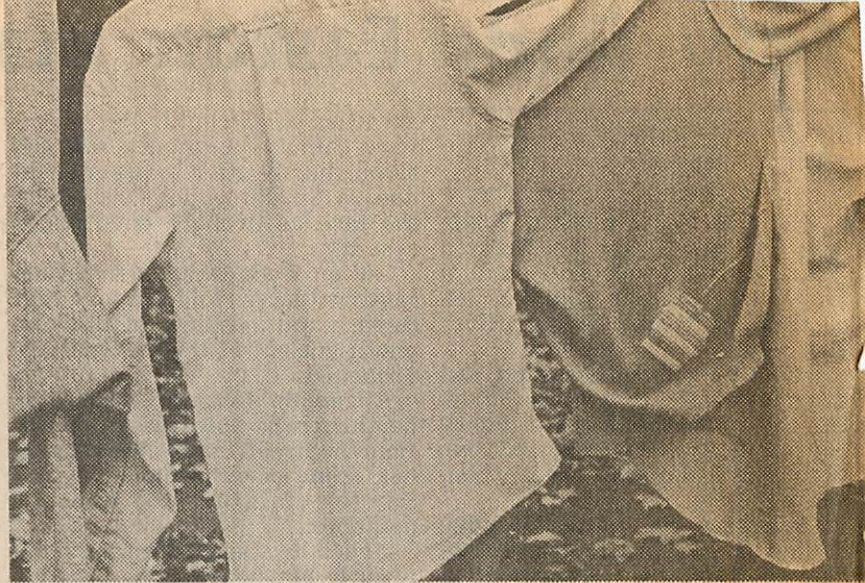
Proud Renaissance in Downtown Easton is sponsoring the "Ice and Lights" celebration on Centre Square, featuring an ice sculpture contest to usher in Easton's holiday celebration. Merchants also will be holding open houses, serving refreshments and having sales, said Pat Eibes, co-chair of PRIDE's Christmas Committee.

Friday evening Dec. 14, luminary candles will circle the area while carolers sing on Centre Square.

On Saturday, sculptors will begin carving their ice blocks around 10 a.m. at Centre Square. Cash prizes totaling \$475 will be awarded to the ice sculptors with the winner receiving \$250. Last year five people entered the contest, but Eibes hopes to have 15 contestants this year.

December's competition is open, but sculptors must pay a \$20 entry fee before Dec. 4. The 300-pound blocks of ice will be provided by PRIDE.

Eibes can be contacted for entrance information by calling Connexions at 215-250-7627.  
RICHARD A. KERSTETTER



## Clothes encounters

A strong wind seems to have generated a close friendship between these shirts

hanging out on  
Township, Pa., b

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