

<http://www.MSCNews.net/news/index.cfm?nk=53652>

St. Joseph Man Convicted For Beating Death

ST. JOSEPH, Mo. (AP) - A 48-year-old man has been convicted in the beating death of another man in St. Joseph.

The St. Joseph News-Press reports that Hank Cooper pleaded guilty Tuesday in Buchanan County to involuntary manslaughter in the June death of 36-year-old Robert Martinez.

Cooper said he fought with two men after finding a man on his bed and running him out of his house. He said that during the fight, he swung a board because one man was coming after him with a knife.

The judge interrupted Cooper at one point, saying that his statement could lead a jury to find him not guilty under a self-defense doctrine. Cooper said he wished to plead guilty, and the prosecution argued that Cooper wasn't acting in self-defense.

Sentencing is set for January 8th.

Associated Press