

The Mississippi Jury Verdict Reporter

The Most Current and Complete Summary of Mississippi Jury Verdicts

July 2024

Statewide Jury Verdict Coverage

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Civil Jury Verdicts

Timely coverage of civil jury verdicts in Mississippi including court, division, presiding judge, parties, case number, attorneys and results. Notable results from the southern region, including Memphis and New Orleans, are also covered.

Premises Liability - The plaintiff (an elderly woman) tripped in her casino hotel room where the bathroom tile met the carpet – in the fall she sustained a broken hip and concussion which limited her independence and quality of life

Jones v. Golden Nugget Biloxi, 20-271

Plaintiff: Thandi Wade and

Raymond P. Gee, Jr., *Tatum & Wade*, Jackson

Defense: Sheldon G. Alston and R.

Lane Bobo, *Brunini Law Firm*, Jackson

Verdict: Defense verdict on liability

Court: **Harrison**

Judge: Christopher L. Schmidt

Date: 5-22-24

Barbara “Sis” Jones, then age 76, was a guest on the morning of 11-10-19 at the Golden Nugget Casino Hotel in Biloxi. The casino is operated as a d/b/a of Riverboat Corporation of Mississippi. Jones, a Napoleonville, LA resident, was in town for her daughter’s 50th birthday party.

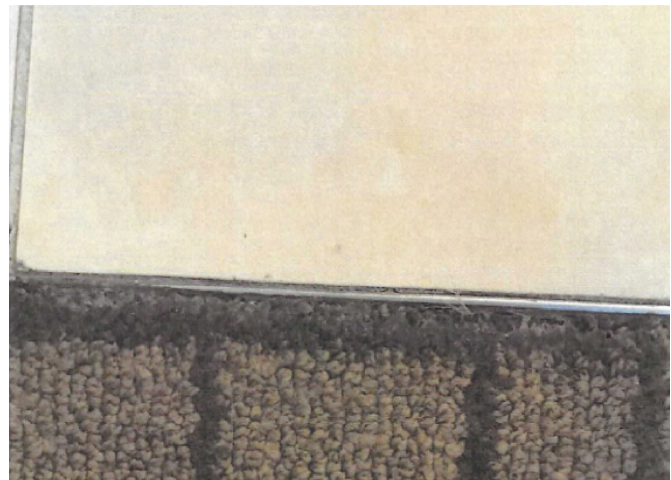
That morning Jones stepped from her hotel bathroom. Her daughters (they were also in the room) would describe hearing their mother “holler” before hearing a separate crash. They found Jones laying on the floor. She would explain she fell when she caught

her toe at the location where the bathroom tile floor met the carpet of the hotel room.

Jones suffered a broken hip in the fall as well as a concussion. She has since treated for a post-concussive syndrome. The combination of these injuries were linked to robbing Jones of her quality of life. She had previously lived alone and enjoyed an active lifestyle engaging with her family and grandchildren.

In this lawsuit Jones sued the casino and alleged the condition of her hotel room was dangerous. She cited a defect in the carpet at the point where it met the tile had led to her fall. Jones in 2023 at age 80 before the case came to trial. Her estate was substituted (representing her daughter) and prosecuted the case to trial. If the plaintiff prevailed against the Golden Nugget, it could take a general award of damages.

The Golden Nugget denied fault and looked to proof that there were



The purported defect where Jones fell

Dog Murder - On Christmas Day the plaintiff's beloved pets (two German Shepherd puppies, Sarge and Ringo) were shot by a neighbor who asserted the dogs were harassing cattle

Dickard v. Rone, 23-214

Plaintiff: Reid K. Posey, *Dunbar*

Davis, Oxford

Defense: M. Reed Martz, *Freeland*

Martz, Oxford

Verdict: Defense verdict on liability

Court: **Panola**

Judge: James McClure, III

Date: 6-3-24

Robert Dickard resides in Batesville on Pine Lodge Road. He bought two German Shepherd puppies (Sarge and Ringo) in the summer of 2022. He paid \$4,000 for each dog. Dickard also installed an electric fence to control the dogs. Sarge and Ringo were described as loving and peaceful family pets to Dickard's minor children.

Dickard's neighbor used his property as cattle pasture for the neighbor's brother-in-law, George Rone. There was proof the Dickard dogs sometimes escaped their electric fence and entered the pasture. Dickard would collect them. There was also evidence the cattle would sometimes roam too. It never rose to a significant incident.

That changed that Christmas Day. The Dickard dogs escaped their fence and entered the adjoining cattle pasture. At 1:45 or so that day, the neighbor texted Dickard and asked if the dogs in the pasture were his. Dickard replied they were and indicated as well (in a joking manner too) that they'd escaped and were difficult. The import of Dickard's reply was friendly and he indicated he'd shortly collect the dog.

When Dickard went to do so some

15 minutes later, he learned they'd been shot dead by Rone. Why? Rone believed they were barking at and harassing the cattle. Dickard would recall the difficulty telling his children (on Christmas) that their pets had been killed.

Dickard filed this lawsuit against Rone and alleged the killing of the dogs was unlawful. He denied they had threatened or harassed the cattle. His damages represented the purchase price for the dogs as well as sums spent on the electric fence.

Rone's defense was simple enough. He admitted killing the dogs (this was not in dispute) but argued he was justified. Why? They had trespassed, harassed and threatened the cattle. If true that would justify the shooting under Mississippi law. Dickard's claim was predicated on his belief Sarge and Ringo were friendly dogs.

The jury instructions first asked the jury if Rone intended to shoot and kill the dogs. The answer (predictably) was yes. The next question was whether the dogs were chasing or killing livestock at the time of the shooting. The answer was yes which was fatal to Dickard's claim for damages. At the time of this report (more than a month after the verdict) no final judgment had been entered.

Case Documents:

[Pretrial Order](#)

[Jury Verdict](#)

[Final Judgment](#)
