

SAT COUNTY JUDGE ACQUITS LAWYER ACCUSED OF SWINDLING FOUR

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Robert A. Hampe, a lawyer from St. Louis who had been charged with felony theft, was found innocent Friday of swindling four investors out of more than \$30,000.

He was acquitted by St. Louis County Circuit Judge Edward L. Sprague 10 days after his week-long trial ended. Hampe had waived a trial by jury. In brief remarks preceding the verdict, Sprague indicated that the evidence had failed to prove Hampe guilty "beyond a reasonable doubt, " as required by law.

Hampe, 41, and his attorney, Alan G. Kimbrell, refused to comment because of a pending civil suit brought by the investors.

Prosecuting Attorney George R. "Buzz" Westfall said he was "suprised and very disappointed" by the verdict. "I'm sure a jury would have found him guilty, " Westfall said.

Sources say Westfall intends to file a complaint with the Missouri Bar to get Hampe disbarred from practice.

Hampe has been a trial lawyer for 15 years. He and Jackie G. Turner, who was shot to death in October 1983, were accused of defrauding investors in CCC Computers Inc., which had offices in Olivette. Hampe had represented Turner in incorporating the business and dealt with investors. Hampe, who lives in the 6200 block of Westway Place in St. Louis, had denied any part in bilking investors.

Turner was facing trial on four counts of felony theft when he was killed in Illinois while cooperating with authorities in a fraud investigation. He had previously been convicted of writing bad checks and felony theft.

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