



The 21st Monthly

From the Office of District Attorney Scott M. Perrilloux



McGHEE FOUND GUILTY

53-year-old Giles McGhee, of Crossover Road, Independence, LA, was found guilty of two counts of first degree murder in a jury trial on February 6, 2014.

Assistant District Attorney Jeff Johnson represented the State with Judge Bruce Bennett presiding.

A 12-person jury was selected on Monday, February 3, 2014, and opening statements began on February 4. Following the three day trial, the jury deliberated for less than two hours before finding the defendant guilty on both counts.

McGhee was charged with the April 5, 2012, murders of Karum E. Smith, age 40, and Tamica L. Muse, age 36.

On the morning of April 5, Hammond police were called to the home of Tamica Muse, the defendant's ex-girlfriend. Muse's daughter, who was home when the murders occurred, testified that she heard a voice she identified as the defendant, followed by the sound of gunshots. She then hid in a closet and contacted 911. Officers arrived to find that both victims had been fatally wounded. Muse was pronounced dead at the scene.

A first degree murder conviction carries a mandatory life sentence. Sentencing is scheduled for March 12, 2014.

MORRIS SENTENCED IN VEHICULAR HOMICIDE

Judge Bruce Bennett sentenced 52-year-old Robert Morris to serve 10 years with the department of corrections for vehicular homicide on February 11, 2014.

Morris, of Avenue K, Kenwood, LA, pleaded no contest to the charge on January 15, 2014. District Attorney Scott Perrilloux prosecuted the case.

The defendant was arrested on November 10, 2012, after

causing the crash that killed Kentwood resident Elmus H. Welch. Police reports show that Morris was traveling eastbound on LA 38 when he ran off the road. When attempting to pull back onto the highway, he overcorrected causing his vehicle to spin into the westbound lane. Morris then traveled over 47 feet before colliding head-on with the victim's vehicle. The defendant was transported to the hospital for treatment, Welch was pronounced dead at the scene.

Officers determined that Morris had been driving under the influence of alcohol. He was subsequently charged with vehicular homicide.

At least five years of the 10 year sentence must be served without benefit of parole, probation or suspension of sentence, said Perrilloux.

BLADES TO SERVE 10 YEARS



Daniel Blades, age 27, of J.T. Conerley Road, Kentwood, LA, was sentenced to serve a total of 10 years with the department of corrections after pleading no contest to simple burglary of an inhabited dwelling, and illegal possession of stolen things on February 4, 2014.

Blades was sentenced to serve 10 years with the department of corrections for the first offense, and one year for the second, to be served concurrently. He must also pay \$1,000.00 in restitution and have no contact with the victims.

Assistant District Attorney Le'Anne Malnar represented the State. Judge Elizabeth Wolfe handed down the sentence.

On October 29, 2012, officers from the Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff's Office were contacted following a burglary at a home on HWY 1061 in Kentwood, LA. The complainant explained that his daughter had called him when she heard a knock at the door, followed by someone checking to see if the



Blades Continued...

doors were locked. The complainant then came home to find Blades inside the shop attached to his residence. The home owner recognized Blades from previous incidents which took place at the victim's place of business.

During an unrelated burglary investigation in December 2013, the defendant was found in possession of multiple items that had been reported stolen.

Hoover Pleads to Meth Charges

Gilbert R. Hoover, Jr., of Sweeny Lane, Ponchatoula, LA, was sentenced to serve 10 years with the department of corrections on February 10, 2014, after pleading no contest to production and manufacture of a schedule II controlled dangerous substance.

Assistant District Attorney Le'Anne Malnar prosecuted the case. Judge Elizabeth Wolfe handed down the sentence.

The defendant was arrested on February 27, 2013, when he was found manufacturing methamphetamine in a shed behind a Ponchatoula residence. The offense reports show that officers from the Tangipahoa Parish Sheriff's Office noted the strong smell associated with methamphetamine production before entering the building. They then found various precursor materials used in the manufacture of methamphetamine. When questioned, Hoover admitted to manufacturing the drug. He was subsequently arrested and transported to the Tangipahoa Parish Jail.

39-year-old Hoover was scheduled to begin a jury trial before Judge Wolfe when he chose to change his plea to no contest. He must serve the 10 year sentence without the benefit of parole, probation or suspension of sentence.



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Students Prepare for Mock Trial

At this year's Baton Rouge Bar Association's Mock Trial Competition, Tangipahoa parish will be represented by the Loranger High School trial and debate team.

Over the past month, attorneys from District Attorney Scott Perrilloux's office have been going to the high school twice per week to help students from the team prepare for the competition.



Assistant District Attorneys Le'Anne Malnar and Angel Monistere have worked to educate the students on the court system and trial practices. Monistere and Malnar taught the team how to lay the foundation of a trial, perform opening statements, and other valuable trial techniques.

On February 26, 2014, students from the trial and debate team attended the second degree murder trials of Carlos Clemmons and Gary Shurley, Jr. Attending the trials allowed students to experience first-hand how a trial progresses.

Malnar also gave the students a tour of the District Attorney's Office and answered questions throughout the day. The students were then able to meet with District Attorney Scott Perrilloux, Judge Jeff Oglesbee, and Judge Doug Hughes. The speakers discussed a variety of topics including the judicial system, trials, and witness credibility.

The Loranger High School trial and debate team is the only debate team in the Tangipahoa Parish School System, said Malnar. They will be competing in the Mock Trial Competition March 15-16, 2014, in Baton Rouge.

Spaghetti Cook-Off

Join us on March 7, 2014 at the annual Independence Sicilian Heritage Festival Spaghetti Cook-off! Judging begins at 12:00p.m. Hope to see you there!

