

# THE 21<sup>ST</sup> MONTHLY

**FROM THE OFFICE OF DISTRICT ATTORNEY SCOTT M. PERRILLOUX**

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## **HALFORD FOUND GUILTY OF MURDER BY JURY**

On August 2, 2017 a St. Helena Parish jury found 37-year-old Michael Lynn Halford of Greensburg, LA, guilty of first degree murder of 75-year-old John Nelson Hornsby. On August 7, 2012, St. Helena Parish Sheriff's Office deputies responded to an address on Rohner Road regarding a death. Upon arrival, a female advised that she was delivering the mail when she came across a burned residence and noticed someone laying on the ground in the front yard.

The victim was charred from heat of the house fire and had 10 total abrasions on his head and face. There was also grass and dirt on the victim's back which appeared to have come from the victim's truck which was behind him with the tire tracks that appeared to have run over him and a maul was lying beside the victim's body.

During the trial, members of the jury saw photos of the crime scene and evidence collected during the course of the investigation of Hornsby's death. During the investigation, it was discovered that Hornsby owned several guns and assorted jewelry including a Rolex watch that would've been inside of the residence.

After shifting through ashes of the burned residence, there were no signs of guns or jewelry found inside or near the residence. Investigators concluded that these items were taken from the residence before the fire was set to cover up the burglary of the residence where Hornsby was murdered.

On September 12, 2012, SHSO was contacted by Louisiana State Police Crime Lab in reference to a DNA profile obtained from the fingernails of the victim. Michael Lynn Halford's DNA was found. Louisiana State Police Crime Lab requested a swab from Halford. The DNA swab from Halford matched the DNA profile found from under the nails of Hornsby. A warrant was issued for Michael Halford for First Degree Murder based on forensic evidence.

On May 9, 2013 detectives received a call from a female who made a contact visit to Halford while incarcerated. She wanted to discuss information pertaining to the homicide case of Hornsby.

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## **SEALS SENTENCED TO 25 YEARS FOR ARMED ROBBERY**

Keon Seals, age 20, of Kentwood, LA, pleaded no contest to armed robbery.

According to the Livingston Parish Sheriff's Office reports, on July 24, 2016 a male made a complaint in regards to an armed robbery. The victim stated that he and his family were traveling on Highway 63 at Highway 16 when they pulled over to assist two males, one who was lying on the ground and seemed to be injured. The male stated that he exited the vehicle to assist when the male laying on the ground pulled out a gun and requested his wallet. The victim then advised that a third male, who was hiding in a ditch, came from behind him and put a gun to his head. The victim gave the three males his wallet and they fled on foot going west toward Highway 16.

When deputies arrived on scene they began patrolling the area for the three male suspects. While patrolling, deputies located three pieces of evidence believed to be relevant to the incident. On the north side of Highway 63 close to the intersection deputies found the victim's wallet, a wristband, and debit card which he advised was in his wallet. On August 2, 2016, LPSO detectives reviewed video at the Lucky Magnolia Truck Stop on Highway 16 to see if three males matching the description given by the victim passed in front of the truck stop before or after the robbery. While reviewing the video, detectives noticed three males walking south on Highway 16 passed the store at 12:14 a.m. At 12:34 a.m. the same three males were seen on video running north on Highway 16 passing the store again. The victim reported the robbery at 12:37 a.m. Through further investigation an anonymous source told detectives the names of three men who possibly committed the crime.

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## ***HALFORD TRIAL CONTINUED***

The female went on to tell detectives that during the visit that Halford admitted to killing Hornsby and had hidden the guns and bloody clothes behind his mother's residence. After receiving this information consent to search property form was signed by the property owner.

The female advised detectives to look for a bag wrapped in plastic under the shed and that the guns were located in the woods.

When the property was searched the following items were located:

- Six guns
- Medicine bottle with the victim's name on
- A green bag with an identification tag with the victim's name
- A clear plastic bag under the shed contained a pistol, Rolex watch, change, bullets, and pieces of jewelry.

All property recovered was logged into evidence.

Assistant District Attorney Richard McShan represented the state; Judge Jeffery Johnson presiding.

Formal sentencing for Michael Halford is scheduled for December 1, 2017.

## ***SEALS CONTINUED***

Detectives located one of the subjects whose name was given in reference to the armed robbery and brought him in for further questioning. The suspect admitted that he, Keon Seals, and another male did in fact commit the robbery. He identified himself as the male lying on the ground and Seals as the male that hid in the ditch and put the gun to the victim's head.

Detectives then drafted arrest warrants for all three suspects for the charge of armed robbery. Once in custody, Seals gave a voluntary written statement admitting to having a part in committing the armed robbery. In the statement he wrote that he apologizes to the victim and his family.

Keon Seals was sentenced to 25 years with the department of corrections. Assistant District Attorney Greg Murphy represented the state; Judge Jeffery Johnson handed down the sentence. A jury trial was scheduled for Keon Seals to begin on August 14, 2017 when he entered his "no contest" plea.

## ***NOTABLE PLEAS***

**Mark Dougherty**, age 48, of Denham Springs, LA, pleaded no contest to hit and run driving resulting in death or serious bodily injury, hit and run driving, and second offense failure to register as a sex offender. He was sentenced to 10 years with the department of corrections. He received credit for time served.

**Michael Dufrene**, age 47, of Loranger, LA, pleaded no contest to forcible rape and intentional exposure to the AIDS virus. He was sentenced to 14 years with the department of corrections. He is to serve the sentence without the benefit of probation, parole, or suspension of sentence.

**Barry Parrish Sr.**, age 53, of Denham Springs, LA, pleaded no contest to second degree rape and aggravated crime against nature. He was sentenced to 15 years with the department of corrections.

**Trevis Whetherspoon**, age 46, of Baton Rouge, LA, pleaded no contest to possession with intent to distribute schedule I controlled dangerous substances- herion. He was sentenced to 10 years with the department of corrections.