



NEWS RELEASE

Office of the United States Attorney
Eastern District of Texas

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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FEDERAL INMATE RECEIVES DEATH PENALTY

(Beaumont, Texas) A 33-year-old inmate of the United States Penitentiary in Beaumont has been sentenced to the Death Penalty for the beating death of a fellow inmate. A federal jury convicted **SHANNON WAYNE AGOFSKY** of Capital Murder last week for fatally beating and stomping another inmate on January 5, 2001. The sentencing phase of the trial began Monday.

Agofsky had been serving a life sentence at the Beaumont prison for the 1989 robbery of a Noel, Missouri bank which resulted in the death of the bank's president.

The penalty for capital murder is either life imprisonment or the death penalty. The United States Attorney's Office received approval from the United States Department of Justice to seek the death penalty in this case. The jury began deliberating late yesterday afternoon and returned with their verdict shortly before 11:00 a.m.

U.S. Attorney Matthew D. Orwig is grateful for the jurors' careful consideration in this case, "The jury was faced with a difficult decision - life or death. The evidence clearly showed Agofsky to be a cold-blooded pathological killer who displayed no remorse for his violent actions. He is certainly a future danger to others. This death penalty verdict is justice long overdue."

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Orwig also said, "Hopefully, some measure of finality will come to the family of Dan Short, who the defendant brutally killed in the 1989 bank robbery, and to the family of Luther Plant, who the defendant savagely beat to death in 2001."

U. S. District Judge Thad Heartfield issued a gag order in March, 2004, directing prosecutors and defense to refrain from commenting on the matter during the pendency of the case before the Court. Judge Heartfield lifted that restriction with today's sentencing.

Agofsky is the first person to receive the death penalty in the Eastern District of Texas' federal courts. An order setting a date for execution has not been issued.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Bureau of Prisons investigated the case. Assistant U.S. Attorney John B. Stevens, Jr. prosecuted the case.

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