



Friday, May 14, 2021

Several Convicted Include Serial Rapist, Man Who Murdered Lakewood Neighbor, New Year's Eve Party Shooter as Jury Trials Resume in Cuyahoga County

CLEVELAND – Cuyahoga County Prosecutor Michael C. O'Malley announced several convictions as jury trials have safely resumed in Cuyahoga County.

"As our community begins to move forward from the pandemic so too do the wheels of justice," said Prosecutor O'Malley, "We are thankful for the court's efforts in implementing proper Covid protocols and precautions so that we can begin to safely try cases again and bring justice for victims and their families."

Between April 2015 and July 2017, **Alton Parker**, 54, sexually assaulted three women. On April 6, 2015, the victim, 25, exited Tower City when she was grabbed from behind, held down, and threatened while Parker sexually assaulted her. On December 2, 2015, the victim, 18, met Parker to purchase a fake ID. Parker drove the victim to Lorain and sexually assaulted her before driving her back to a hotel in Downtown Cleveland where she was able to escape. On July 10, 2017, Parker met the victim, 18, outside of Tower City and drove her to a parking lot where he sexually assaulted and hit her as she resisted. He then drove her to a Strongsville motel where she was able to run away. Investigators identified Parker through hotel records and obtained a subsequent warrant for his DNA that connected him to all three sexual assaults. A jury found him guilty of **three counts of Rape, three counts of Kidnapping, and two counts of Sexual Battery**. Parker was sentenced to 33 years in prison. He also will be classified as a Tier-III Sex Offender, which requires him to register every 90 days for the rest of his life.

On January 29, 2018, **Gary Taylor**, 58, called the Lakewood Police Department (LPD) to report that he had not heard from his neighbor, 70, for a few days. LPD officers responded to the neighbor's residence on Robinwood Avenue near Madison Avenue. They found the victim deceased in a pool of blood in his basement. The Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation and the Cuyahoga County Medical Examiner's Office (CCMEO) responded to help process the scene. The CCMEO ruled the victim's death as homicide due to blunt force head trauma. A subsequent investigation by LPD linked Taylor to the murder through DNA evidence and the victim's ledger found on scene. The ledger contained hundreds of entries that detailed multiple instances in which the victim loaned Taylor approximately \$25,000 for a variety of things over a two-and-a-half-year period. The last entry was on January 27, 2018 – two days before the victim was found deceased. Taylor's DNA was found on the victim's pants pockets and shirt. A jury found Taylor guilty of **one count of Aggravated Murder, two counts of Murder, one count of Felonious Assault, one count of Aggravated Robbery, one count of Aggravated Burglary, and one count of Theft**. He is scheduled to be sentenced on Wednesday, May 26 at 1 p.m. He faces up to life in prison without the eligibility of parole.

On January 1, 2020, **Jaron Heard**, 28, fired several shots during a New Year's Eve party inside a nightclub on St. Clair Avenue near East 13th Street in Cleveland. Multiple victims were struck and received treatment for various injuries. Investigators with the Cleveland Division of Police's Third District Detective's Bureau linked Heard to the crime through video surveillance. A jury found Heard guilty of **two counts of Felonious Assault and one count of Carrying A Concealed Weapon**. A judge found Heard guilty of **one count of Having Weapons Under Disability**. He is scheduled to be sentenced on Wednesday, May 26 at 9 a.m.