

MESSAGE FROM PROSECUTOR SHERRI BEVAN WALSH

Contact: Laurie Cramer
(330) 643-2800

Jury returns guilty verdict for man who murdered elderly woman Death penalty is possible sentence

(February 14, 2011, Akron) ... Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that Devon Owens, 38, of Akron, was found guilty by a jury after a week long trial for the Aggravated Murder and Rape of 73-year-old Clara Wilfong, of Akron. The jury reached its verdict after almost five hours of deliberations.

Owens was convicted of Aggravated Murder with a death specification, two counts of Rape, and Aggravated Burglary. The sentencing hearing will be held in Judge Judith Hunter's court on February 28, and the jury is expected to receive the case for deliberations on March 2.

On May 29, 2011, family members found Owens shirtless in Ms. Wilfong's bedroom. Owens jumped out a second story window and fled. Ms. Wilfong was found dead in her bedroom and had been raped and strangled. Owens fled to California but returned to Warren, Ohio, where some of his family lives. Based on a composite description, Owens was named a suspect early in the case. The Akron Police interviewed Owens and obtained his DNA swab, which matched DNA found on the victim.

After the sentencing trial, the jury can recommend a sentence of Death, Life Imprisonment without Parole, or Life Imprisonment with parole eligibility after 25 or 30 full years. If the jury recommends the Death Sentence, Judge Hunter would make the final decision as to whether the Death Penalty will be imposed.