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NEWS
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Murderer's Parole Denied

Parole Board reverses recommendation after hearing with victim's family

AKRON, OHIO – March 28, 2012 – Summit County Prosecuting Attorney Sherri Bevan Walsh today announced that the Ohio Parole Board denied parole to Dale Collins, who brutally murdered his elderly neighbor, Helen Shay, in 1975. Prosecutor Walsh requested a hearing with the entire board after the board recommended Collins be paroled.

The Victim Services Division typically notifies victims and their families of upcoming parole hearings. However, there was no information about Shay's surviving family. Prosecutor Walsh appealed to the public to find the victim's family so that they could have an opportunity to tell the board how they have been impacted by Shay's murder.

"The Parole Board always considers the wishes of the victims and their families when deciding whether to parole an offender, especially when the crime is an old one," said Prosecutor Walsh. "Because this murder happened so long ago, we didn't know how to contact Mrs. Shay's surviving family – or if she even had any family in the area anymore. Asking the public for help was a longshot, but the response was incredible. Within hours multiple family members contacted my office, and Mrs. Shay's great-nephew spoke to the Parole Board yesterday about why his family opposed Dale Collins' parole."

On December 23, 1975, Dale Collins and Michael Spuller burglarized the home of Helen Shay, an elderly neighbor. Collins, who had shoveled her driveway earlier that day, called Shay and asked if she would like some company. She agreed but said she did not want him to bring anyone with him.

Spuller waited outside while Collins knocked on Shay's door. When she answered, Collins pushed her down the steps to the basement, kicked her several times and then choked her with a dog chain. After killing Shay, Collins, Spuller and Collins' brother ransacked the home. Shay's sister, Julia Davis, discovered the body on Christmas Eve.

Dale Collins was sentenced to life in prison for Aggravated Murder and Aggravated Burglary with parole eligibility after 20 years. Collins will again be considered for parole in November 2015, when he will have served almost 40 years in prison.