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Streetsboro Man Sentenced to Life In Prison for Murdering Akron Man Following Dispute Over Dirt Bike

AKRON, Ohio (Monday, April 23, 2018) – Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that Summit County Common Pleas Court Judge Tammy O’Brien sentenced William Knight, 64, of Lady Catherine Street in Streetsboro, to life in prison for killing 24-year-old Keith Johnson.

Knight will be eligible for parole after serving 18 years of his sentence.

On April 10, 2018, a Summit County jury found Knight guilty of the following charges:

- Two Counts of Murder, each with a Gun Specification – both Special Felonies
- Two Counts of Felonious Assault, each with a Gun Specification – felonies of the 2nd degree

“Mr. Knight’s decision to fire his gun forever changed the lives of two families. Today, as Keith Johnson’s mother Laquita said, justice was served. I truly hope the Johnson family finds peace as they move forward,” said Prosecutor Walsh.

In the evening of March 20, 2017, William Knight shot and killed Keith Johnson. The shooting followed a dispute over a stolen dirt bike. Earlier that day, Knight’s son-in-law noticed his dirt bike, which had been stolen in February of 2016, was for sale on a social media site. Knight, his daughter and son-in-law went to Danmead Avenue in Akron to confront Keith Johnson and recover the dirt bike.

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When Johnson attempted to leave the area on the bike, the son-in law grabbed the dirt bike in an attempt to stop Johnson. Johnson was able to pull away from the son-in-law, but was subsequently shot in the head by Knight. The jury rejected arguments by William Knight's attorney that Knight was acting in self-defense and defense of his family members.