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NEWS
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Dawud Spaulding Sentenced to Death

First capital murder case prosecuted in Domestic Violence Court

AKRON, OHIO – February 15, 2013– Summit County Prosecuting Attorney Sherri Bevan Walsh today announced that Judge Paul Gallagher imposed the death sentence a jury recommended last month for Dawud Spaulding, 30, of East Buchtel Avenue in Akron. Spaulding shot and killed Erica Singleton and Ernie Thomas and paralyzed Patrick Griffin in a 2011 shooting spree. Judge Gallagher also sentenced Spaulding to 32 years and six months in prison for charges from two other cases of domestic violence toward Singleton and the remaining charges in his murder trial that do not qualify for the death penalty.

Singleton, Spaulding’s girlfriend and mother of his seven-year-old son and two-year-old daughter, had filed for a civil protection order and was in hiding from Spaulding when he murdered her. Spaulding had discovered where Singleton was staying and drove by the house on the morning of December 15, shooting and paralyzing Griffin, who was leaving the home. Later that morning, Spaulding returned to the home and shot and killed Singleton and Thomas, Griffin’s uncle, in the driveway. Because the jury found Spaulding guilty of the specification for murdering two people, Spaulding was eligible to receive the death penalty.

“More than three-quarters of murdered women are stalked by their killers, and this case is unfortunately not an exception. Dawud Spaulding engaged in a pattern of stalking, attacking and terrorizing Erica before he killed her,” said Prosecutor Walsh. “The prosecutors in my Domestic Violence Unit worked hard to ensure justice for Erica Singleton, Ernie Thomas and Patrick Griffin. I thank them, the jury and Judge Paul Gallagher, who presided over this case in the Domestic Violence Court.”

On November 9, the jury found Spaulding guilty of:

- Two counts of Aggravated Murder, with a specification for killing two or more people
- Attempted Murder, a felony of the first degree, with a firearm specification
- Felonious Assault, a felony of the second degree, with a firearm specification
- Domestic Violence, a felony of the third degree
- Having Weapons Under Disability, a felony of the third degree
- Intimidation of a Crime Victim, a misdemeanor of the first degree, and
- Violation of a Protection Order, a misdemeanor of the first degree

Spaulding is scheduled for execution on March 3, 2014.