



NEWS RELEASE

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Man Convicted and Sentenced to Life for Commerce City Murder

Mark Antonio Lewis was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison without parole Friday in the stabbing death of a man whose body was found dumped by the Sand Creek Greenway in Commerce City in 2015.

"The Commerce City Police Department did an exceptional job of solving this case as the defendant went to extraordinary measures to conceal this murder," said District Attorney Dave Young. "I am thankful that the jury rejected the defendant's claim of self-defense and I am thankful that the jury took the time to reach a just verdict for Forrest Paskins and his family."

Forrest Paskins, 56, was found stabbed to death in the 4900 block of Sand Creek Drive South on September 7, 2015. He was stabbed three times, one of which pierced his aorta.

Lewis (DOB 03/03/77) stabbed Paskins during an argument September 6, 2015 at 2380 N. Lansing St., Aurora where they lived with Lewis' girlfriend, Zacheia White, and her mother. Witnesses testified that Lewis wrapped Forrest's body in a tablecloth, put it in White's van and drove to the location where he dumped the body. The body was spotted the next day by two people who were walking on a bike trail along Sandcreek Drive.

"This case is about a man who became enraged and murdered his roommate," Deputy District Attorney Jake Woods told the jury in closing arguments. This case is about a man and his girlfriend who would stop at nothing to get rid of evidence, to dispose of the body across town at the Sand Creek Greenway, who would tell police story after story to cover up what they did."

The two cleaned up the house and van with peroxide, and disposed of the knife, tablecloth and gloves used in the clean-up, Woods said. They agreed on a story to tell authorities "so the defendant could do everything in his power to get away with murder."

The jury returned its verdict Friday after hearing closing arguments Thursday afternoon. Lewis was convicted of first-degree murder after deliberation and tampering with physical evidence. White was sentenced to four years' probation in April after pleading guilty to tampering with physical evidence (F6) and accessory to crime (F4).