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NEWS
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Man sentenced for the murders of his mother and brother

(Akron) ... Summit County Prosecutor Sherri Bevan Walsh announced today that Michael Knudson, 40, of Hudson, was sentenced to 22 years to Life for the murders of his mother, Patricia Knudson, 64, and brother, John Knudson, 42. The three lived in the family home together.

Prosecutor Walsh represented the State's position on sentencing and said, "I cannot imagine the horror of this situation for any family. Michael Knudson brutally murdered his mother and brother and then buried them in the backyard of the home where he grew up. He then set fire to that family home and fled. Clearly, this brutal crime could only be done by a very disturbed person.

"In fact, Michael admitted in pre-sentence statements that he had been arguing with his mother and brother because they blamed him not working and contributing financially for the loss of their home to foreclosure. He further stated that he just 'snapped' and killed them. The family had to be out of the house on April 7; we believe Michael likely killed them on April 1, based on cell phone records and John's failure to show up at work that evening.

"Although Michael made statements that he killed them with a metal bar, the medical examiner found that the object was likely a hatchet type of weapon because of the nature of the victim's wounds. Both victims had been struck on the head approximately 20 times. Patricia had a chop type of mark on her arm that appeared to be a defensive wound. John's head had numerous blows to it, and he also suffered trauma to his neck, as his Adams Apple was crushed. John's hand was split down the middle, again a defensive wound."

Walsh continued, "Michael also admitted that he spent several days trying to conceal the evidence, culminating in burning down the family home. The medical examiner found that he must have poured bleach on his mother's body, because she had dye transfer stains on her torso. He also spent a great deal of time trying to find a place to bury the bodies, as holes were dug around the property, but the ground was too frozen. He eventually buried them in a shallow grave under a wood pile, a tragic resting place to leave your own mother and brother. In fact, he also had no interest in assisting the police in finding their bodies, telling his sister, 'They will find them in due time.'"

Walsh concluded, “They did find the bodies and other evidence after more than 400 man hours were spent at the crime scene by Hudson Firefighters and Police Officers, Ohio Search and Rescue and Two Cadaver Dogs, the State Fire Marshall’s Office and others. I want to thank everyone who assisted in solving this crime, especially the Hudson Fire and Police Departments, who managed the investigation. We would not be here today without all of their dedication and assistance with this case.”

On October 22, 2009, Knudson pled guilty to two counts of Murder, special felonies, Aggravated Arson, a felony of the second degree, and Tampering with Evidence, a felony of the third degree, for the murders of his mother and brother in their Hudson home.

On April 5, 2009, the Hudson Fire Department was called out to 1280 Connecticut Woods, in Hudson. The house was engulfed in flames and Michael Knudson was seen by a passerby speeding out of the driveway. Hudson police found Knudson the next day at a homeless shelter in Akron and arrested him on arson charges.

A few days later, after an extensive search of the home and its grounds, the bodies were found in a shallow grave in the backyard of the residence under a wood pile.