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HYANNIS MAN GUILTY OF STABBING MURDER OUTSIDE HOUSE PARTY

BARNSTABLE – A jury has convicted a man on charges that he stabbed and killed a man outside of a house party Hyannis in 2016, Plymouth County District Attorney Timothy J. Cruz has announced.

After a seven- day trial in Barnstable Superior Court, a jury deliberated just under four hours before finding Kelly D. Ridley (DOB: 2/27/98) of Hyannis, guilty of one count of First Degree Murder and two counts of Assault and Battery with a Dangerous Weapon. Judge Robert Rufo sentenced Ridley to serve imprisonment without the possibility of parole on the murder charge and 8-10 years to run concurrent on the two counts of Assault and Battery with a Dangerous Weapon.

At 1:57 a.m. on October 22, 2016, Barnstable Police received multiple 911 calls from witnesses at a house party at 133 Beth Lane in Hyannis, reporting that a person had been stabbed. Upon arrival, police found the victim, Thomas J. Russell Jr. (DOB: 5/23/90), seriously wounded with multiple stab wounds to his abdomen and lower body, lying in the middle of the road in front of that address. Russell was transported to Cape Cod Hospital where he was pronounced dead of his injuries.

Barnstable Police immediately contacted State Police Detectives assigned to the Cape and Island's District Attorney's Office and an investigation commenced. In order to avoid the appearance of a conflict, the Cape and Island's District Attorney referred the case to the Plymouth County District Attorney's Office because the victim was a close relative of a person within their office.

As part of the homicide investigation, Barnstable Police and State Police Detectives gathered and preserved forensic evidence, executed search warrants, reviewed electronic data, and interviewed dozens of witnesses. The Office of the Chief Medical Examiner determined that Russell's death was a homicide caused by multiple sharp, stab wounds to his abdomen and lower extremities.

Witness accounts described Ridley as arming himself with a knife before walking down the driveway, engaging in a fight with Russell and stabbing him nine times.

“This was a brutal, senseless crime that took the life of a 26-year-old man,” DA Cruz said. “I am hopeful that with today’s verdict and sentence, justice was done for the family of Thomas Russell and that his family can now find some measure of peace.”

In addition to Russell’s murder, Ridley was tried and found guilty of striking the victim with a metal Razor scooter prior to the fatal altercation. He was additionally charged with stabbing Michael James, a resident of 133 Beth Lane, who Ridley stabbed when James attempted to break up the fight in which Ridley fatally stabbed Russell.

The case was prosecuted by Assistant District Attorneys Jessica Elumba and Thomas Flanagan and was investigated by State Police Detectives assigned to the Cape and Islands District Attorney’s Office and Barnstable Police.

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