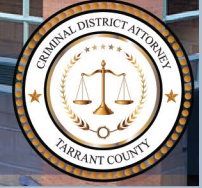


FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

# Sharen Wilson CRIMINAL DISTRICT ATTORNEY



Contact: Samantha Jordan, Communications Officer

O: 817.884.3120, C: 817.914.4600

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Friday, February 15, 2019

## BENBROOK MAN GETS 46 YEARS FOR LABOR DAY MURDER



(Fort Worth, TX) – Kevin Ashley Parnell has been found guilty of Murder and sentenced to 46 years in prison for the September 2017 killing of Sammie Jones.

Parnell, who admits to drinking heavily throughout the day of the murder, disliked his stepdaughter's boyfriend, who was Jones' roommate. Parnell sent the boyfriend numerous threatening messages via text and Facebook that day, blaming his stepdaughter's boyfriend for her recent troubles with the law.

That evening, Parnell showed up at the house shared by Jones, his stepdaughter, and her boyfriend, banging on the door demanding to see the boyfriend. Jones, who Parnell did not know, answered the door and attempted to calm the irate Parnell. After a short verbal exchange, Parnell shot Jones in the face at close range. Witnesses who heard the gunshot ran to the house and tried to render aid, but Jones died at that location.

Parnell fled the scene, returned home and attempted to cover the evidence of his crime. He deleted many of the messages and postings he sent to the boyfriend that day, took apart the murder weapon and threw it off an overpass, and then burned the clothing he had worn over to Jones' house. A warrant was issued for his arrest the night of the shooting and he was picked up by fugitive officers the following day.

Due to the many racial slurs used in his messages to the boyfriend, the prosecution also requested a finding against Parnell based on bias or prejudice. Although the finding would have had no legal effect on the penalty range for 1<sup>st</sup> degree felony Murder, prosecutors felt the evidence of a racial component was so compelling it must be included in the charges against Parnell in this case.

Prosecutors Tracey Kapsidelis and Ryan Hill represented the State in the five-day trial, seeking justice for Jones' family.

*"The jury recognized the complete senselessness of this murder," said Kapsidelis. "These are no longer the days of old, when disputes were settled in Hell's Half Acre with a bullet."*

Parnell was also charged with Tampering with Evidence for his attempts to destroy the evidence, for which he was found guilty and sentenced to two years in prison.