



Rod Underhill, District Attorney

1021 SW Fourth Avenue, Room 600
Portland, OR 97204-1193
Phone: 503-988-3162 Fax: 503-988-3643
www.mcda.us

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Thomas Dorris receives 17 year prison sentence for killing man, wounding another person in downtown Portland

Today, Multnomah County District Attorney Rod Underhill announced 50-year-old Thomas Dorris was sentenced to 17 years in prison for the June 19, 2016 shooting in downtown Portland that resulted in Mr. Chester Newborn being killed and another person being wounded by gunfire.

"I have heard the saying, 'a man is not dead while his name is still spoken.' So I will speak his name daily," Mr. Newborn's sister said in court on Thursday. "I will write his name in the sand on the beaches so he can be with the ocean that he loved so very much. I will tell his jokes. When I see someone do something that reminds me of him, I will make sure to let them know and tell them just how wonderful he was. I will make sure he lives on breathing through me in every possible way that I can. I will continue to say his name. Chester "Chaz" Eugene Newborn."

Other family members spoke at sentencing and remembered Mr. Newborn as being the most outgoing, fun-loving and easy-going person in the family. His niece told the defendant that his actions on June 19, 2016 resulted in an uncle, father, brother and cousin being taken away.

"There can never be true justice for the cowardly and evil act of taking someone's life. The only satisfaction that this sentence has given me is the hope that you will never have the opportunity to inflict the harm and the pain that you have inflicted upon our family onto another family," she said.

This investigation began on June 19, 2016 when officers assigned to the Portland Police Bureau responded to the intersection of Northwest 4th Avenue and Northwest Davis Street after receiving information of a shooting. Upon arrival, law enforcement could hear a female screaming in pain. Witnesses told police that two people had been wounded, including Mr. Newborn. The Oregon State Medical Examiner's Office determined Mr. Newborn died as a result of a gunshot wound and ruled his death to be a homicide. The other victim, an adult female, sustained a gunshot injury to her right leg.

After the shooting, law enforcement spoke with witnesses who reported hearing multiple gunshots followed by a man, later identified as Dorris, running into the road with a firearm. Shortly after entering a nearby gas station, law enforcement took Dorris into custody. Upon his arrest, police found an empty pistol holder on Dorris and a black Sig Sauer P250, 9 mm automatic pistol sitting on the counter next to the cash register.

On October 12, 2018, Dorris appeared before Multnomah County Circuit Court Judge Eric J. Bergstrom and pleaded guilty to one count of manslaughter in the first degree, one count of assault in the third degree and one count of being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Upon his release from prison, he will be on three years of post-prison supervision.

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Contact: Brent Weisberg, Communications Director
Phone: 503.988.6567
Email: Brent.Weisberg@mcda.us