

# Texas carries out nation's first execution of 2009

By MICHAEL GRACZYK

**Associated Press Writer**

HUNTSVILLE, Texas -- A man convicted of murdering three people during a night of robberies more than 13 years ago in Fort Worth was put to death Wednesday evening in the nation's first execution of the year.

In a brief, final statement, Curtis Moore, 40, thanked a woman who administers to the spiritual needs of death row inmates.

"I want to thank you for all the beautiful years of friendship and ministry," Moore told Irene Wilcox as she watched through a window a few feet from him. Moore never acknowledged a man who survived his attacks or relatives of the three who died.

He was pronounced dead at 6:21 p.m., eight minutes after the lethal drugs began flowing.

Moore exhausted his appeals in the courts, and the Texas Board of Pardons and Paroles earlier this week refused a clemency petition that said he could be mentally retarded and ineligible for the death penalty. Courts earlier rejected similar mental retardation claims.

Moore was the first of six prisoners scheduled to die this month in Texas, the nation's most active death penalty state.

In 2002, Moore made a trip to the Huntsville death house but was returned less than three hours before his scheduled execution when the U.S. Supreme Court agreed his mental retardation claims could be reviewed. Last October, the high court refused his appeal, clearing the way for Wednesday's lethal injection.

Moore was condemned for the fatal shootings of Roderick Moore, 24, who was not related to him, and LaTanya Boone, 21, both of Fort Worth. The two were found shot to death in a roadside ditch across from a Fort Worth elementary school in November 1995.

That same night, firefighters summoned to extinguish a car fire found 21-year-old Darrel Hoyle of Fort Worth and 20-year-old Henry Truevillian Jr. of Forest Hill, shot and burned.

Truevillian, robbed of \$5, was dead. Hoyle, robbed of \$150, survived and helped lead police to Moore and his nephew, Anthony Moore, then 17, who later pleaded guilty to two counts of murder in exchange for two life prison terms.

Testimony at Curtis Moore's trial showed the shootings culminated a drug ripoff.

Moore's trial lawyer, George Gallagher, said once jurors convicted Moore, there was little he could do to prevent them from deciding on the death penalty because Moore wouldn't allow him to put on an aggressive case during punishment.