

Death sentence ordered for convicted Sunrise triple murderer

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One of his victims was a mother of two he pumped no fewer than 23 bullets into. The others he met near the Swap Shop and gunned down for no apparent reason — one man as he headed to his car with snacks for a drive-in movie, the other as he sat at the wheel of a parked car.

The convicted triple murderer — Ralston "Jay" Davis — will pay for that Dec. 2, 2005 killing spree with a death sentence and two life sentences, Broward Circuit Judge Jeffrey Levenson decided Thursday.

A Broward County jury in July recommended 8-4 that Davis, 25, of Sunrise be executed for killing Myosha Proby, 28.

Davis had called Proby, whom he'd known for less than a month, and told her he was going to kill her minutes before showing up at her Lauderhill apartment, dressed in black and armed with an AR-15 assault rifle.

Less than 30 minutes later, Davis killed Carlos Jones, 26, and Ravindra Basdeo, 29, at an Exxon gas station east of the Swap Shop. Jones was ordered to lie on the ground, Basdeo to open his mouth for the rifle muzzle.

The jury recommended life in prison without possibility of parole for those killings.

Levenson was not bound by jurors' recommendations, but followed them to the letter.

He noted the cold-blooded way in which Davis killed Proby, ordering her to her knees before spraying her with bullets.

"There can be no doubt that Ms. Proby suffered immeasurable fear and terror as the events played out," Levenson said. "This was not a fit of rage which was manifested suddenly, but rather a contemplative act and involved heightened premeditation."

Tears slipped down Marcia Davis' face as with eyes closed, she heard the judge send her son to Death Row.

Davis, in a rumpled, red jailhouse jumpsuit, frowned slightly.

Moments later, in the courthouse hallway, Proby's aunt, Tabitha James, heaved heavy sobs: "Thank you, Lord. Thank you, thank you."

Jones' father, Roberto Jones, shook his head, declining comment as he left the courtroom.

Basdeo's family did not attend the hearing.

Another of Proby's aunts, Mary McKenzie rejoiced: "My family and I are very happy with the outcome. It won't bring her back...daughters (ages 8 and 14) without a mother and us without our Mimi."

Davis' mother and three of his siblings, leaned silently against a nearby wall, watching the victims' families express their sorrow and satisfaction.

Her large eyes pained, reddened and welling with tears, Marcia Davis said: "God is a just God, and I pray for the victims' families. I feel terrible about what happened, but I still firmly believe that my son had a mental situation."

During the trial, prosecutor Brian Cavanagh said Davis, a Piper High graduate, was on a crack-cocaine fueled rampage that deadly day.

Davis' defense attorney, Jeff Harris, argued that his client was suffering from a psychotic episode. Davis testified that he was driven by the Holy Spirit, a sixth sense and voices.

The jury rejected Davis' insanity defense and convicted him of three counts of first-degree murder.

Florida's average Death Row stay is 12.3 years, though some inmates have lingered there for decades before having their sentence carried out or dying of natural causes.