



Riverside County District Attorney

CRIMINAL CASE UPDATE

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MAN SENTENCED TO DEATH FOR THE 2001 MURDER OF HIS 2-MONTH-OLD DAUGHTER WHOSE REMAINS WERE FOUND IN A STORAGE UNIT

INDIO -- Today, Feb. 21, 2014, a Riverside County judge sentenced a man to death for the 2001 murder of his 2-month-old daughter in Desert Hot Springs, whose remains were found in a plastic container left in an Arkansas storage unit.

Jason Michael Hann, DOB: 12-19-74, of Vermont was sentenced by Judge James Hawkins at the Larson Justice Center in Indio.

In December 2013, a Riverside County jury found Hann guilty of one count of first-degree murder and one count of assault on a child resulting in death. Jurors also found true the special circumstance allegation of having been previously convicted of another murder. The same jury also decided that Hann should be sentenced to death.

The co-defendant in this case, Krissy Lynn Werntz, DOB: 9-28-79, of Indiana, is also charged with one count of murder for the death of her daughter, 2-month-old Montana. Werntz was originally going to be tried at the same time as Hann; however the judge severed her because Werntz's attorney had family medical emergencies. Werntz now has a jury trial date of March 17, 2014.

In February 2002, the decomposed remains of a baby were found in a storage unit in Arkansas after the defendants in this case failed to pay the bill so the unit's contents were sold. The purchaser of the unit's contents made the gruesome discovery while cleaning out a plastic container. It was determined at the unit's previous renters were Hann and Werntz.

An "all-points bulletin" to law enforcement agencies nationwide for Hann and Werntz was issued and both were arrested in April 2002 at a motel in Portland, Maine. Subsequent to the arrests, law enforcement authorities found that the couple's third child, a baby boy about a month old, had life-threatening injuries consistent with child abuse including a dozen rib fractures and retinal hemorrhages. During questioning by police, Hann told them that Montana, whose remains were found in the Arkansas storage unit, died in Desert Hot Springs in 2001. The day after the arrests, police found the remains of another of the couple's children in a storage unit in Arizona. That baby, a boy less than two months old, had been killed in July 1999 in Vermont and his remains kept in a plastic container by the couple for more than a year before they rented the Arizona storage unit in December 2000. In February 2006, Hann entered a "nolo contendere" plea in Vermont and was convicted of second-degree murder for that baby's murder and sentenced to 27 to 30 years in prison.

The case, INF066465, was prosecuted by Deputy District Attorney Lisa DiMaria of the DA's Homicide Unit.