

NEWS RELEASE

Luther Strange

Alabama Attorney General



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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AG ANNOUNCES CONVICTION FOR ANDALUSIA MURDER; KILLER SENTENCED TO LIFE WITHOUT PAROLE

MONTGOMERY – Attorney General Luther Strange announced that an Andalusia man has been convicted and sentenced to life without parole for a 2009 killing. Michael Dayle Barbaree, 31, yesterday pleaded guilty in Covington County Circuit Court to the murder of Travis Denton Sasser.

Barbaree had been living in an apartment at the Sasser residence. On May 14, 2009, Barbaree entered Sasser's home, allegedly stealing items including a pistol and money. Barbaree beat Sasser to death with a hammer, then attempted to burn the house and left Sasser's bedridden wife trapped inside. After a caregiver arrived and called for help, Merita Ann Sasser was taken to a hospital and later died. Travis Denton Sasser was 75 and Merita Ann Sasser was 71.

Barbaree was indicted in September of 2009 for the Sasser murder. His extensive criminal history includes eight prior felony convictions for burglary, forgery, theft, escape and other crimes, all in Covington County.

"This was a savage attack that cost the lives of an elderly couple," said Attorney General Strange. "It is appropriate that he spend the rest of his own life in prison, without the possibility of parole or the opportunity to harm anyone else."

Attorney General Strange commended those who handled the investigation and prosecution of this case, noting in particular Assistant Attorneys General John Gibbs and Tina Hammonds and the Attorney General's Criminal Trials Division; Special Agents of the Attorney General's Investigations Division; and the Covington County District Attorney's Office and Sheriff's Office.

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