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Steve Marshall
Alabama Attorney General



For More Information, contact:

Mike Lewis (334) 353-2199

Joy Patterson (334) 242-7491

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ATTORNEY GENERAL STEVE MARSHALL ANNOUNCES CONVICTION OF BIRMINGHAM LAWYER FOR KIDNAPPING, ROBBERY, ATTEMPTED MURDER

(MONTGOMERY) – Attorney General Steve Marshall announced the conviction today of a Birmingham lawyer for first-degree robbery, first-degree kidnapping and attempted murder. James Woolley, 52, was found guilty by a jury in Jefferson County Circuit Court following a trial that began on Monday.

The Attorney General’s Criminal Trials Division presented evidence about crimes committed against the victim, Justin Bicknell, on January 25, 2016.

Two co-defendants, Monique Roscoe and Kimberly Murphy, previously pleaded guilty to their part in the crimes. Roscoe, 42, is a man, and Murphy, 33, is a woman. Both testified this week about the following events.

Bicknell was lured to Murphy’s house in the East Lake area of Birmingham, where Woolley and Roscoe attacked him in the basement. They shoved him onto a couch in an area covered by plastic, held him at gunpoint, hit him in the head with the blunt side of a machete, and threatened to cut off his fingers and genitals with bolt cutters. They told him several times that it was his last day on earth and they would kill him. They robbed him of his phone, wallet and other personal items. When his attackers were distracted by a phone call, Bicknell ran for the stairs and Roscoe and shot at him but missed. Roscoe continued to pursue Bicknell outside the house and shot at him again. Bicknell was able to escape to his home nearby and called for police assistance. The attack purportedly arose from a conflict over a transaction for the victim to buy tires from Woolley.

In addition to testimony of co-defendants Roscoe and Murphy, testimony was presented by the responding patrol officer about Bicknell’s injuries and by others who placed Woolley at the scene near the time of the crimes.

“The jury’s guilty verdict today brings an important measure of justice for this victim,” said Attorney General Marshall. “The defendant should receive a strong sentence of time in prison for this horrendous attack, which is particularly reprehensible that these deeds were committed by a man who, as a lawyer, was entrusted as an officer of the court.”

Woolley faces a penalty of 20 years to life for each of the three class A felonies. Sentencing is set for April 26. Anyone with other information about Woolley that could be important for the Court to hear before sentencing is urged to provide it to the Attorney General’s Office prior to the sentencing date. They may contact the Attorney General’s Investigations Division at 334-242-7345 and ask for Special Agent Richard Windham.



Roscoe previously pleaded guilty to first-degree robbery and attempted assault. Murphy, who was not present after Bicknell first arrived at the house, pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit first-degree robbery. They also are scheduled to be sentenced on April 26.

The cases were prosecuted by Attorney General Marshall's office due to recusal by the District Attorney's Office. Attorney General Marshall commended Assistant Attorneys General John Kachelman and John Hensley of his Criminal Trials Division and Special Agents of his Investigations Division. He thanked the Birmingham Police Department, noting in particular Detective Johnny Brooks.