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PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NO BODY HOMICIDE CONVICTION - JURY CONVICTS HANDYMAN OF MURDER OF RETIRED PROFESSOR /MOUNTAIN BIKE INVENTOR

Woodland, CA – October 23, 2007 - On Tuesday afternoon, a Yolo County jury returned a guilty verdict against defendant Charles Cunningham (38) for the First Degree Murder of John Scott (74), a retired UC Davis Professor Emeritus who also invented the mountain bike. At the time of the murder, Cunningham had worked for the elderly professor as a handyman at his home located just outside Davis, CA. In June of 2007, Professor Scott disappeared. His body has never been found. Cunningham was subsequently arrested for the murder after his fingerprints were found inside the victim's blood splattered home and the victim's passport, travel trailer, and other personal items were found in the defendant's possession. The jury found that the defendant killed the victim after the professor had discovered the handyman was stealing his checks and forging them. The defendant was a parolee at the time and feared returning to prison. The jury deliberated for four days before returning guilty verdicts on all counts, including First Degree Murder, Felon in Possession of a Firearm, Grand Theft and multiple Prison Priors.

Cases involving a no-body homicide are extremely rare in the region. In the Sacramento region, this case is only the second since the Christie Wilson, Thunder Valley Casino, case to result in a jury trial guilty verdict in many years. According to Yolo County District Attorney Jeff Reisig, "The verdict in this case is a tremendous relief to the victim's surviving family members and represents an important success for the justice system. The verdict validates the message that the fact a murderer may successfully dispose of a body does not entitle him to an acquittal and is simply not a form of success that society should ever reward."

Sentencing has been set for December 3, 2007 at 8:30 a.m. in Dept 5. The defendant faces life in prison.

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