



PRESS RELEASE

Murderer Receives 50 Years for Domestic Violence Homicide

April 18, 2022

Bryan, TX – On April 13, 2022, Terry Ratliff, 58, pled guilty to Murder in front of Judge John Brick and was sentenced to 50 years in prison.

On January 7, 2019, College Station Police responded to the victim's residence after her twelve-year-old daughter called 911 to report that she had returned home from school to find her mother, Theia Flakes, unresponsive and in a pool of blood. Theia's daughter and other family members told police that Terry Ratliff, Theia's boyfriend, had been extremely abusive to her in the past and was on bond for domestic violence strangulation against Theia out of Madison County. The victim's daughter also revealed that Ratliff and Theia had an argument the night before the murder and that Theia's vehicle was missing from their home.

Subsequent investigation revealed that Theia sustained multiple blunt force trauma injuries and multiple, deep stab wounds to her back. The murder weapon, which was found to have both the victim's and defendant's DNA, was also found at the scene.

After the Defendant did not show up to work that day, and instead fled to Midland, Texas. College Station Police, along with officers from the Texas Department of Public Safety, Midland County Sheriff's Office, and Midland Police Department tracked Terry Ratliff to the home of a relative in Midland. Ratliff was driving the victim's vehicle. A search of the relative's home revealed clothes with apparent blood stains in the washer and the distinct odor of bleach was noted throughout the home. Midland authorities would later charge the defendant's relative with Tampering with Evidence related to the murder investigation.

Members of the Brazos County District Attorney's Office travelled to Midland in preparation for this case and met with numerous prior abuse victims of the defendant. The defendant's criminal history included numerous incidents of both domestic violence and child abuse. The Midland County District Attorney's Office provided critical support to the Brazos County District Attorney's Office in their investigation and prosecution of this case.

“Theia Flakes was a loving mother whose memory can never be erased by the Defendant’s heartless actions. Her family can rest easy knowing that the Defendant will never be free to harm another living soul.”

