

Felon gets life term in hammer murder

BY BILL BRAUN
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Tulsa County jurors convicted a repeat robbery offender of beating a man to death in the victim's home.

Billy Gene Marshall received a no-parole life prison sentence Thursday night for the first-degree murder of Alonzo Tibbs Jr., 68, who was found dead in his residence in the 4600 block of North Hartford Avenue.

Jurors found Marshall guilty of robbing Tibbs and imposed a life sentence which standing by itself would not preclude the possibility of parole.

After being found guilty, Marshall indicated that he did not want to remain in District Judge William Kellough's courtroom for the sentencing stage.

Marshall was not in court for arguments and presentation of evidence during that stage, but Kellough directed that he be brought to court to hear his sentences.

Prosecutors Jack Thorp and Jose Berlin maintained that Marshall beat Tibbs with a hammer on June 14, 2006.

Tibbs sustained 12 strikes to the head, Berlin said.

"It's a vicious murder,"

Thorp told jurors. "It's not your run-of-the-mill killing."

Prosecutors pointed to evidence that Tibbs' wallet was found in bloodied jeans that were found at a residence in the 1500 block of East 51st Place North. Marshall had recently lived there and had kept a key to that house. DNA evidence also pointed to Marshall, prosecutors asserted.

Defense attorney Marny Hill maintained that a time-line and people's sightings of Marshall on the day of the homicide provided reasonable doubt in the case.

Marshall was sentenced in 2007 to life in prison with parole possible when another jury convicted him of robbery with a dangerous weapon. In that case, a Tulsa store clerk identified him as the person who hit her on the head with a hammer on May 30, 2006.

Marshall, whom records list as either age 54 or 55, picked up for convictions for robbery between 1975 and 1987. He also has felony convictions for burglary, perjury and escape, records show.

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