

## Felon pleads no contest in death of Tulsa man

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A frequent felon who is accused of killing a Tulsa man while in the process of stealing a vehicle pleaded no contest Tuesday to second-degree murder,

William Gary Parris, 37, will be sentenced June 18 on a murder charge in connection with the death of Stephen Stewart, 62.

Stewart tried to stop Parris from stealing a truck July 12 in the 400 block of South 59th West Avenue, police reported.

Stewart had been a delivery driver for Metro Builders Supply since 1974, a company executive said. The truck was a work vehicle that was assigned to Stewart.

In Parris' haste to leave the scene, he drove the truck into Stewart, who was crushed between that vehicle and Stewart's personal truck, police reported.

Parris then drove away and attempted to steal other vehicles in the same neighborhood, police said. He was arrested in the 4600 block of West Eighth Street.

Parris, of Tulsa, pleaded no contest to second-degree "felony murder," which involves a legal theory that he caused the death while he was stealing an automobile.

Because that accusation formed the underlying basis of the felony murder charge, a separate count of larceny of an automobile had to be dismissed, a prosecutor said.

Parris also pleaded no contest to four counts of burglary of an automobile committed July 12 after Stewart was fatally injured.

He also pleaded no contest to a charge that he used a flashlight to assault a man who confronted him in connection with one of those auto burglaries.

Police said Parris had methamphetamine with him when he was arrested. He also pleaded no contest to a felony drug-possession count.

Parris has no agreement with prosecutors to govern his punishment, and his pleas were lodged after a jury-selection process had started for a trial in District Judge William Kellough's court.

Assistant District Attorney Jack Thorp plans to present victim impact information in court June 18 before Kellough sentences Parris.

Prosecutors assert in court documents that Parris accumulated nine felony convictions between 1991 and 2001 - two for burglary, two for possessing a stolen vehicle, three for larceny of an auto or vehicle, and one each for escape and for a driving under the influence offense involving great bodily injury.

Parris is in the Tulsa Jail.

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**Associate Images:**