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Press Release

For Immediate Release

May 4, 2021

Jury Sentences Felon to 99 Years in Prison For Violent Aggravated Robbery in Friendswood

GALVESTON – A Galveston County jury has found Dexter Lafayette Triplett, 42, guilty of Aggravated Robbery and sentenced him to 99 years in prison.

On the night of April 10, 2017, Triplett and his co-defendant, Jonathan Bell, robbed a liquor store in Friendswood after committing a string of robberies in Harris County. Bell carried a long rifle while Triplett attacked the clerk, Charlie Lam. With a large bottle of liquor, Triplett bludgeoned Lam on the head five times then kicked him twice, leaving the bleeding Lam for dead. Lam was rushed to the hospital.

Shortly after the robbery, officers from the Friendswood Police Department found Triplett in the neighborhood behind the liquor store. They arrested Triplett on a warrant for robbery from Copperas Cove. In a bin outside a residence, a K9 officer discovered Triplett's clothes and a ski mask, which he shed after the robbery. Officers also found a bottle of liquor, covered in the victim's blood.

The trial began on April 28, 2021 and concluded on May 4, 2021. The State was represented by Chief Assistant District Attorney Matthew Shawhan and Assistant District Attorney Katlin Robinson. At trial, prosecutors emphasized the violent nature of the crime. The robbery in Friendswood ended Triplett's string of robberies. In closing argument, Chief ADA Shawhan stated that "one of the biggest mistakes Triplett made was crossing county lines into Galveston County."

The jury found Triplett guilty after 30 minutes of deliberations and sentenced him to 99 years in prison plus a \$10,000 fine. He will be eligible for parole in 30 years. In the punishment phase of the trial, prosecutors highlighted Triplett's history as a dangerous career criminal. ADA Robinson implored the jury to consider whether a lenient sentence was appropriate: "Why show Dexter Triplett any leniency, when he didn't show any leniency to Charlie Lam?"

The Galveston County Criminal District Attorney commends the work of the Friendswood Police Department in this case, especially that of K9 Officer Yoery, who has since passed away. The District Attorney also commends the work of the Galveston County District Clerk's Office in providing safety protocols during the trial.

Cause No. 18-CR-1297, 10th Judicial District Court, Judge Kerry Neves presiding.