

Office of the Kane County State's Attorney



JOSEPH H. McMAHON

State's Attorney

Kane County Judicial Center
37W777 Route 38 Suite 300
St. Charles, Illinois 60175

General Offices: (630) 232-3500
Contact:
Christopher Nelson (630) 232-3500

CARPENTERSVILLE MAN GUILTY OF MURDER IN DRUG DEAL GONE BAD

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A Carpentersville man has been convicted of murder in a drug deal that turned violent.

Errick L. Brown, 41 (d.o.b. 10-9-1970), of the 100 block of Amarillo Drive, Carpentersville, was convicted by Circuit Judge Timothy Q. Sheldon, of two counts of first-degree murder. In addition, Judge Sheldon ruled that Brown personally discharged the firearm that caused the death of 25-year-old Joseph Vonner of Carpentersville.

Brown waived his right to a jury trial. Judge Sheldon heard the case April 16-24, 2012, signed the written verdict May 23, and read the verdict today in court.

On Oct. 9, 2009, Brown contacted Vonner, his roommate, and asked if he could obtain an ounce of powdered cocaine to sell to a third party. Vonner acquired the cocaine and it was delivered to the third party in return for \$1,000. Brown and Vonner each received \$100 profit from the sale. The purchaser was dissatisfied with the quality of the cocaine and wanted a refund. Brown returned his \$100 profit to the buyer and asked Vonner to do the same. Vonner refused. That evening at the residence they shared, during a birthday party for Brown attended by many, tensions increased between the men because of Vonner's refusal to provide the refund. Brown eventually obtained a .45-caliber handgun from his car in the garage, told a witness that he planned to shoot Vonner and returned to the house. At about 12:30 a.m. Oct. 10, 2009, as Vonner was leaving through the front door of the house, Brown followed him and fired at least three shots directly at Vonner. One struck Vonner in the back of his head and another struck Vonner in the back of his left shoulder. Vonner died almost instantly. At least two people present in the house and one other person outside house witnessed the murder.

Brown, his 16-year-old son, his wife, one other witness and a 2-year-old immediately fled to Chicago.

On Jan 6, 2010, after a warrant for his arrest was issued, Brown surrendered to Chicago police.

Judge Sheldon set Brown's next court appearance for 9 a.m. July 18, 2012, in Courtroom 319 for post-trial motions and sentencing. Brown faces a sentence of between 45 and 85 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The sentence includes a mandatory 25-year enhancement because Brown personally discharged the gun that killed Vonner.

Brown had been held in the Kane County jail since his arrest in lieu of \$2 million bail. Bond was revoked upon conviction.

"Our thanks to Carpentersville Det. John Spencer and Det. Steve Drews, whose investigation and assistance in the trial preparation were invaluable in this conviction," Kane County State's Attorney Joe McMahon said.

The case was prosecuted by Kane County Assistant State's Attorneys Alice Tracy and Andrew Whitfield.