



For Immediate Release

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Man Sentenced to Death Row for Capital Murder

Fort Worth, TX – A Tarrant County jury sentenced Valerian "Will" O'Steen, 28, to death for killing a 26-year-old mother of two in February 2022.

The case was prosecuted by Tarrant County Assistant District Attorneys Allenna Bangs and Peter Giesecking.

Marissa Grimes, of Arlington, was reported missing by her family in February 2022. Her body eventually was found in the crawl space under O'Steen's pier-and-beam rental home in Fort Worth.

"There was one person with the motive, opportunity, and the desire to kill Marissa Grimes," Bangs said. That was O'Steen.

O'Steen had a history of domestic violence against Grimes. In January 2022, after not knowing Grimes for long, O'Steen threatened to kill her. He refused to let her leave his house for days, but Grimes eventually was able to text her father, which led to police intervention. "She was in fear for her life," Giesecking said.

O'Steen was arrested on domestic violence charges. As he bonded out of jail, the court ordered him to stay away from Grimes and wear a GPS ankle monitor.

He was mad, prosecutors told the jury. He wanted the charges dropped and the monitor off his body. And he told people that he was going to kill Grimes.

Grimes was scared and her family convinced her to move to West Texas. But soon, Grimes and O'Steen again were talking, texting, and seeing each other.

Driving a U-Haul packed for her move, she stopped by his home late on February 12, 2022, to say a quick goodbye. That goodbye turned into an evening where Grimes and O'Steen visited one of O'Steen's neighbors, who saw O'Steen threaten Grimes with a gun.

That was the last time Grimes was seen alive.

Grimes's family soon reported her missing. Days later, her abandoned U-Haul was found about a mile from O'Steen's house.

Police executed a search warrant and found Grimes's decomposing body wrapped in blankets and a tarp in the crawl space under O'Steen's home. "He dug her a shallow grave and lived above her for 10 days," Bangs said. Among her injuries: A broken arm, nose, and ribs. Two black eyes. Multiple lacerations to her head. Bruises on her arms, hands, and fingers. Her hair was chopped short in some areas. The Tarrant County Medical Examiner's Office ruled her death a homicide caused by blunt force trauma to the head.

"She was beaten to death," Giesecking told the jury. "She had been tortured."

Bangs called on the jury to do what was right.

"This is not a place for mercy," she said. "That is not what we dispense. In this courthouse, we administer justice."

District Attorney Phil Sorrells praised the work of the Fort Worth Police Department. DA Investigator Tim Pinckney and Victim Advocate Clara Salvatierra also worked on the case.