



Department of Justice

R. Booth Goodwin II, United States Attorney

Southern District of West Virginia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 20, 2010
<http://www.usdoj.gov/usao/wvs/>

CONTACT: Tracy Dorsey Chapman
800-659-8726*(304)345-2200
Tracy.Chapman@usdoj.gov

MERCER COUNTY MAN CONVICTED OF INTERSTATE STALKING

Defendant Stalked the Victims Over Three Decades

BECKLEY, W. Va. – A Mercer County man was convicted today on two counts of interstate stalking. Thomas C. Shrader, 55, of Duhring, Mercer County, West Virginia, was found guilty following a three day trial in Beckley.

According to evidence presented at trial, in July 1975, Shrader murdered the mother of his high school ex-girlfriend, “DS,” as well as one of DS’s friends, in DS’s presence at her home in North Fork, McDowell County after she tried to end the relationship. Although Shrader pled guilty to two counts of first degree murder, he continued to stalk and harass DS from prison with phone calls, letters, and even a frivolous lawsuit alleging she breached a promise to marry him. DS eventually married RS and the couple were forced to move out of the area to Texas in 1978 to escape Shrader’s harassment. Unaware of their whereabouts, Shrader continued to try to find DS’s location by harassing her family through the 1980’s. Shrader was released from prison in October 1993.

Through the use of the Internet, Shrader eventually was able to track down DS and her family in Sugarland, Texas. Further evidence at trial revealed that Shrader accessed MySpace to obtain family photographs of DS, RS and their children. Trial testimony also showed that Shrader carried DS’s high school senior photo and the recent family photo of the victims in his wallet and told his friends that DS was still the “love of his life” over thirty years later.

In August 2008, Shrader obtained DS’s unlisted home phone number and began calling her home. Shrader told RS that DS was still “his God” and that he would do anything for her. Receiving no response, in late October 2009, Shrader sent a thirty-two page ultimatum via United Parcel Service to DS and RS at their home in Texas. Among other things, Shrader demanded that DS resume a relationship with him before Shrader “initiated his next step.” The letter contained numerous threats, including statements that it was time for DS to “face the piper” and that she was going to be “Scottie Peterson famous.”

In November 2009, the FBI arrested Shrader for a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2261A(2) for the use of a facility of interstate commerce, UPS, to harass, threaten and intimidate RS and DS. After a two and half day trial in Beckley, West Virginia, a federal jury convicted Shrader on two counts of interstate stalking, one each for his conduct toward DS and RS.

“Hopefully today’s verdict will bring closure to a haunting chapter in the lives of the victims of Mr. Shrader’s crimes,” said U.S. Attorney Booth Goodwin. “We will push for the maximum sentence possible in hopes that Mr. Shrader will never again have the opportunity to terrorize anyone like he did these innocent victims for 35 years.”

When the FBI arrested Shrader in November 2009 on the interstate stalking charges, the agents confiscated three firearms from his home. In July 2010, Shrader was convicted in a separate jury trial for being a felon in possession of a firearm.

Sentencing on all three convictions is set for November 18, 2010, before United States District Judge Irene C. Berger. Based on his convictions, Shrader faces life in prison and a \$750,000 fine. The Federal Bureau of Investigation conducted the investigation. Assistant United States Attorneys Thomas C. Ryan and John File handled the prosecutions.

###