

For Immediate Release

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Justice for Danny Claire: Chickamauga Man Convicted of Felony Murder

June 26th, 2025 - On May 23, 2025, Jeremy McCrary, a 46-year-old man from Chickamauga, was convicted by a Walker County jury of Felony Murder, Aggravated Assault, and Possession of a Firearm During the Commission of a Felony, for his role in the March 2022 shooting death of Danny Claire, a 53-year-old man from Chickamauga. The evidence, presented over a week-long jury trial, showed that on March 22, 2022, McCrary and his son-in-law were aggressively driving and speeding down Lee-Clarkson Road in Chickamauga on crotch rockets while passing multiple vehicles. McCrary and his son-in-law attempted to pass a vehicle driven by Danny Claire when Claire swerved to prevent them from passing. The pair eventually passed Claire, and McCrary's son-in-law struck Claire's side mirror with his hand, causing damage to the vehicle. McCrary and his son-in-law then continued on to the Dollar General store off Garrett's Chapel Road. Claire pulled into the store parking lot as well, where he confronted McCrary and the son-in-law about the damage to his vehicle. The men began arguing in the parking lot when McCrary removed a gun from his pocket and shot Claire in the chest. Claire was unarmed, and no physical altercation had taken place between the men prior to the shooting. Claire died in the parking lot within minutes of being shot by McCrary.

Following the shooting, McCrary and his son-in-law concocted a false narrative about the events that led up to Claire's death. McCrary told law enforcement that he and Claire had been engaged in a minor tussle wherein Claire had pushed McCrary into a fence after approaching him in the parking lot, which prompted McCrary to shoot Claire. This version of events was ultimately proven to be untrue, as multiple passersby and store customers observed the shooting, and the physical and medical evidence was not consistent with the defendant's version of events.

At trial, the jury heard from the store customers who witnessed the murder, the Georgia Bureau of Investigation medical examiner, officers from the Walker County Sheriff's Department, and a trooper from the Georgia State Patrol, who was able to recreate the crime scene using drone technology. McCrary testified in his own defense at trial, again proffering to the jury the false narrative that he gave to law enforcement regarding circumstances surrounding Claire's murder. Unpersuaded, the jury convicted McCrary after the week-long trial.

Following the return of a guilty verdict, Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit Superior Court Judge Don W. Thompson sentenced McCrary to serve the remainder of his life in the Georgia Department of Corrections, with the possibility of parole, plus five additional years.

The State of Georgia was represented by Chief Assistant District Attorney Deanna Reisman and Assistant District Attorney Zachary Trippe. The case was expertly investigated by Captain Richie Dye with the Walker County Sheriff's Office and Detective Rebecca Beason (retired). Trooper Scotty Smith with the Georgia State Patrol provided assistance in recreating the crime scene through drone technology. District Attorney's Office investigators Christy Smith and Daniel Thacker provided invaluable assistance to the successful prosecution of McCrary. Victim Advocate Amy Reed served as

the liaison to the Claire family throughout the years-long prosecution of McCrary. The Claire family provided a statement which is attached to this release.

Lookout Mountain Judicial Circuit District Attorney Clayton M. Fuller said deterring violent crime remains a top priority. He praised the work of Chief Assistant District Attorney Deanna Reisman and her team, calling her “one of the best prosecutors in the state,” and commended the “exceptional” efforts of law enforcement throughout the investigation and trial.

Fuller added, “I’ve spent 15 years in the military advising on the lawful use of force. What happened that day wasn’t self-defense — it was an unnecessary and deadly escalation. In Walker County, if you take a life without cause, we’ll make sure you spend yours behind four walls.”

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We, the Claire family are eternally grateful for the kindness and initial investigative work completed by Det./Sgt. Becky Beason; the compassion, guidance and incredible support given to us by eloquent Amy Reed, Director of Victim Services; the dedication and commitment of proficiency from the tenacious Deanna Reisman, Chief Assistant DA; the hard work and complete dedication of Zachary Trippe, Assistant DA; Officer Justin Smalls; Captain Richie Dye, WCSD; all Witnesses testifying at trial; the GBI Medical Examiner; and the attention, sacrifice and the hard work of each and every Juror. Without you as a juror, right and wrong and the system of justice would not exist. Thank you. For the past three years we have prayed for the truth to be told and for what could never have been accomplished without the unwavering determination of the LMJC Walker Co. DA's office, a GUILTY verdict.

Deanna Reisman and her team treated us like family and brought to light the TRUTH and FACTS of the case to the jury so that we finally have JUSTICE FOR DANNY.

