

Suspect ruled not competent

Monticello homicide trial delayed pending mental health review

By Jessica Contrera

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MONTICELLO — A White County man accused of fatally stabbing his mother and half sister last month was declared not competent to stand trial.

David Scott Rodenbarger, 20, of Monticello, faces two counts of murder for the deaths of 41-year-old Michelle J. “Shelly” Haskins and 6-year-old Jillian E. “Jilly” Haskins.

At a hearing Monday in White Superior Court 1, Judge Robert B. Mrzlack ruled Rodenbarger is not competent to proceed with a trial. He will be sent to a mental health facility for 90 days; the case will then be reviewed in court.

During that time, Rodenbarger will be treated in at-



David Scott Rodenbarger

tempts to rehabilitate his mental capacities to a point where he can competently aid in his own defense. At this time, the state has not released any details on Rodenbarger’s mental health problems.

Both doctors who examined Rodenbarger determined he was not fit to stand trial, the judge said.

During his incarceration at White County Jail, Rodenbarger repeatedly smeared himself with feces and drank his own urine, according to court documents. He also harmed himself, appeared delusional in his actions and speech and spent prolonged periods staring into space. Rodenbarger was transferred to Marion County Jail on Feb. 19.

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Rodenbarger is accused of stabbing his mother and half sister using a two-pronged meat fork and knife at the family’s home, 5642 E. Richey Park Drive, near Lake Freeman, sometime late Feb. 1 or early Feb. 2.

Shelly Haskins was able to call 911, but she had died from her wounds by the time emergency responders arrived.

Jilly Haskins died from multiple stab wounds and brain swelling caused by blunt force trauma to her head, according to court documents. Shelly Haskins died from a throat wound.

White County Prosecutor Bob Guy said Monday that he is still determining whether to pursue the death penalty in the case, should it proceed. Rodenbarger is eligible for the death penalty or life without parole because of his half sister’s age and because it was a double homicide.

“We are still in the process of gathering information,” Guy



Jillian E. Haskins



Shelly Haskins

said. “No final decision has been made, and we don’t want to make that decision hastily.”

If the prosecutor chooses to pursue capital punishment for Rodenbarger, it could cost White County between \$500,000 and \$1 million. But Guy said money is not a factor in his decision.

“Justice needs to be served regardless of the cost involved,” Guy said. “I will not make a determination of whether or not to seek a certain penalty in any case based on the cost.”

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