

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 13, 2010

SPARTANBURG MAN RECEIVES LIFE PRISON SENTENCE FOR DEADLY CHILD ABUSE

A Spartanburg man was convicted of killing a 10-year-old special needs child and received the maximum prison sentence – life without parole - today after Solicitor Trey Gowdy asked the jury in closing argument to deliver a verdict so loud a 10-year-old child could hear it “in heaven”.

Tony Tyre, 33, was found guilty of homicide by child abuse and child abuse with great bodily injury at the conclusion of a three-day jury trial. He will serve every day of Circuit Judge Derham Cole’s prison sentence.

Tyre caused the death of 10-year-old Meah Weidner by violently shaking the wheelchair-bound child and her dropping her on her head on July 5, 2009 while she was left in his care. The victim died a short time later at Spartanburg Regional Medical Center as a result of a severe brain injury caused by blunt force trauma.

Weidner suffered from Cerebral Palsy and her only means of communicating was by a smile, a laugh or a cry of distress.

Two weeks before the fatal injury, Weidner was treated at Spartanburg Regional Medical Center for a broken arm caused by Tyre.

Solicitor Gowdy, Principal Deputy Solicitor Barry Barnette and Assistant Solicitor Cindy Crick based their case on the testimony of investigators, nurses, doctors and Weidner’s family members. Gowdy was especially complimentary of the doctors who came to court and testified.

Tyre testified that he never meant to hurt Weidner. Solicitor Gowdy repeatedly shot holes in the defendant’s story during cross-examination. Gowdy questioned Tyre about his inconsistent statements to investigators. He also wanted to know why Tyre, a professional paramedic and a volunteer fireman, failed to call 911 when he realized Weidner was critically injured.

Tyre called two area fire departments on a non-emergency line and asked for oxygen but did not call 911. Weidner was treated for the broken arm at Spartanburg Regional Medical Center.

“Tony Tyre committed horrific acts of violence against one of the most vulnerable members of our community,” Gowdy said. “I’m thankful the jury saw through his pathetic and demonstrably false explanations and convicted him.”

For more information, contact Murray Glenn at 809-4892.

###

