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Darrin Shores convicted in 2008 cold case murder of Thomas Johnson

Nine years after the murder, a tip to the IMPD Cold Case Homicide Unit led to the conviction

(Indianapolis, Ind.) – Marion County Prosecutor Terry Curry announced today that Darrin Shores was found guilty by a jury yesterday in the murder of Thomas Johnson. The murder occurred on Thanksgiving morning 2008 in an apartment complex on the city's northwest side. The case was solved by the IMPD Cold Case Homicide Unit after a tip came from a cooperating individual in June 2016 which led to the identification of Shores as the suspect. Shores was convicted of one count of Murder and is scheduled to be sentenced in Criminal Court 3 on December 20, 2017.

"It is our hope that we can bring justice to the families of all homicide victims," Prosecutor Curry stated. "However, it is particularly gratifying that the family of Thomas Johnson will now have the finality of this conviction after nine years of uncertainty regarding the circumstances of his death."

On the morning of November 27, 2008, Thomas Johnson was found by a responding IMPD officer in a vehicle that had run into a guard rail in the 5500 block of Rosewood Commons Drive. Johnson appeared to have been shot, and he was pronounced dead at the hospital a short time later. Officers were alerted to the crash by a witness who called 911 after hearing a horn blow and Johnson yell for help from the vehicle before it crashed.

An autopsy revealed that Johnson's death was caused by a single gunshot wound to his back. The initial investigation did not result in the positive identification of a suspect. During the following eight years, the lead detective on the case retired, and it was later reassigned to the Cold Case Homicide Unit.

In June 2016, the IMPD Cold Case Homicide Unit received a tip from a cooperating individual. That tip led to a second cooperating individual who told investigators they were present when an individual named Darrin Shores had communicated with the victim prior to the murder and provided a timeline for the crime. A review of phone records confirmed that the last call made by the victim's phone was to a phone number listed for Darrin Shores.

The second cooperating individual told investigators that on the morning of the murder they were with Shores in his apartment in the same apartment complex where the murder occurred. After Johnson contacted Shores to tell him that he was coming to get his loaned vehicle, Shores left the apartment with his handgun. During the trial the witness further testified that they heard a single gunshot a few minutes later, then Shores returned to the apartment and made a comment that he had shot Johnson.

Darrin Shores was charged with Thomas Johnson's murder in April 2017. He was located living outside Atlanta, Georgia, where he was arrested in May 2017 and extradited to stand trial in Marion County.