

Barr gets life plus 30 years - Herald-Mail, The (Hagerstown, MD) - October 6, 2005

October 6, 2005 | Herald-Mail, The (Hagerstown, MD) | PEPPER BALLARD

HAGERSTOWN

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A tearful Chad Grant held a framed photograph of William "Billy" Grant and looked into the blank eyes of the man who killed his father.

"Your son gets to sit here and look at you," Grant, 20, told Steven Linn Barr, the framed picture shaking with his every word. "This is all I've got: pictures. I just hope it was worth it," Grant said.

Circuit Judge Frederick C. Wright III on Wednesday sentenced Barr to serve life plus 30 years in state prison for the first-degree **murder** of William Grant, 46, the attempted first-degree **murder** of Cathy Myers, 45, and the use of a handgun in the commission of a crime of violence. Barr pleaded guilty to the charges in August.

Wright told Barr, 42, that he first would be eligible for parole when he is about 67 years old.

"I think that he, like anyone, should have the opportunity for release from prison before death, even though it will be slim," Wright said.

Washington County State's Attorney Charles Strong asked that Barr be sentenced to life without the possibility of parole. Barr murdered Grant and shot Myers three times at about 3:30 a.m. Nov. 15, 2004, as her two daughters fled the 12057 **Kemps Mill** Road home near Williamsport, Strong said.

Wright said he granted the possibility of parole because Barr entered a guilty plea instead of putting the families involved through a weeklong trial. He said his decision also reflected Barr's remorse for the crimes.

Before he was sentenced, Barr stood up and faced Myers, her family and Grant's family, who filled several rows of the courtroom's benches.

Shaking and holding a sheet of paper, Barr apologized, taking "full responsibility" for what happened that morning.

"There's not a single day that goes by that I can't escape the shame, the guilt ...," Barr said, his eyes misty. He apologized to his family for putting them through the ordeal.

Barr's mother, Sara Barr, said her son is a "considerate, kind person" who was "deeply hurt at what

Mrs. Myers did to him."

Sara Barr, 72, claimed Cathy Myers broke off a dating relationship with Barr for someone "who made more money than him," alluding to Grant, who owned and operated Affordable Homes in Falling Waters, W.Va.

Chad Grant is now president of the company.

"If Mrs. Myers chose to quit seeing him under different circumstances, possibly all of this could be prevented," Sara Barr said.

Barr's sister, Julie Duckett, and best friend, Joel Jordon, spoke fondly of Barr, whom they said would do anything for family and friends.

"The Steve that has been presented by the state is most certainly not the Steve that I love, that I grew up with," Duckett said. "He could always be counted on in a time of need. He is a father who loves his son and his daughter."

She said she named Barr in her will to take care of her own children.

Strong said that although many might say Barr is "a good father ... a good friend," the morning of Nov. 15 showed his "dark side."

Strong mentioned a series of charged and uncharged crimes Barr allegedly committed against women over the course of more than 20 years.

"He is a person who cannot handle rejection by women ... He has a problem with women," Strong said.

The night of Nov. 14, Barr saw William Grant's "yellow Corvette" parked in her driveway, Strong said. Barr then proceeded to follow through with a crime he had planned for about two weeks, marked by his purchase of tools he used to break into her house, Strong said.

After hiding for more than three hours in Myers' garage "to make sure (Myers and Grant) were asleep," he broke into the house, went into the bedroom and shot Grant "once in the shoulder and chest," causing him to fall to the floor. "Then he put three (bullets) in his head," Strong said.

When this was happening, Myers told Barr, "It wasn't worth this," Strong said. "He went up to her and shot her in the back of her head ... He thought she was dead."

But Myers ran through her front door, Strong said.

"There are bullet holes in the doors and the walls" that prove Barr shot at her as she fled the room, Strong said.

On Wednesday, Myers was quiet. She did not speak during the hearing, but she talked afterward about that night and how, with God's help, she has survived.

Myers, who walks with a limp, pointed to her thigh and said, "From here down, there's a thick feeling."

Myers spent the first three weeks after the shooting in a medically induced coma, not knowing of Grant's death until a month after his **murder**. Myers said she died in the ambulance the morning of the shooting, but rescue workers revived her.

Nearly a year has passed since the shootings and Myers has spent much of it in recovery. She spends \$300 a week on physical therapy, she said.

"God was with me that night. He actually spoke to me," she said.

When she was shot and fell to the floor in her bedroom, Myers said she asked God for the forgiveness of her sins and prayed that her soul would be sent to heaven.

"In a Holy Spirit voice, He told me to get up and get out of the house," she said.

Myers said she believed Barr's apology was "sincere."

"I know he's a good man, but he does let his anger get in the way," she said.

She said that she did not leave Barr because he did not make enough money.

"It was his eyes and the way he looked at people," she said.