



JACKSON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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KEITH R. RITCHESON, MURPHYSBORO, INDICTED FOR FIRST DEGREE MURDER

Michael C. Carr, Jackson County State's Attorney, announced today that Keith R. Ritcheson, age 40, of Murphysboro, Illinois, was indicted by a Grand Jury in Jackson County, Illinois on four counts of First Degree Murder regarding the death of his parents, Burl and Brenda Ritcheson.

The Bill of Indictment charges Ritcheson in two alternative counts with causing the death of Burl Ritcheson by shooting him: (Count 1) "knowing such act would cause the death of Burl Ritcheson;" and (Count 2) "knowing such act created a strong probability of death or great bodily harm to Burl Ritcheson." In addition, the Bill of Indictment charges Keith Ritcheson in two alternative counts with causing the death of Brenda Ritcheson by shooting her: (Count 3) "knowing such act would cause the death of Brenda Ritcheson;" and (Count 4) "knowing such act created a strong probability of death or great bodily harm to Brenda Ritcheson."

If convicted, the sentence which must be imposed is 20 to 60 years' imprisonment for each victim. If it is shown that a firearm was used in the commission of the offense, the defendant also faces an additional mandatory sentence of 25 years to life for each victim. Probation is not a possibility for First Degree Murder and a defendant is required to serve the entire sentence.

An Indictment is merely a charge and not evidence. Under the law, a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of a jury.

Ritcheson is currently in custody at the Jackson County Jail with bond set at \$1,000,000. He is scheduled to appear in court for arraignment on September 12, 2017, at 12:45 p.m.

The investigation is being pursued by the Jackson County Sheriff's Office. Assistant State's Attorney Casey E.A. Bloodworth is handling the prosecution.

*A prosecutor has the responsibility of a minister of justice and not simply that of an advocate. This responsibility carries with it specific obligations to see that the defendant is accorded procedural justice and that guilt is decided upon the basis of sufficient evidence. Except for statements that are necessary to inform the public of the nature and extent of the prosecutor's action and that serve a legitimate law enforcement purpose, by Supreme Court Rule, the State's Attorney is not allowed to make statements about pending cases or investigations which would pose a serious and imminent threat to the fairness of the proceeding. **Rule 3.8 Special Responsibilities of a Prosecutor.** For a list of certain subjects which have been determined to pose such a threat to the fairness of the proceedings and for a list of subjects which do not, please see **Rule 3.6 Trial Publicity.** For any press release involving a case which has not yet been tried, please note that: **a defendant is presumed to be innocent of a charge until proved guilty beyond a reasonable doubt to the satisfaction of the jury.***