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**D.A. BROWN: SUFFOLK MAN CONVICTED IN PAYROLL ROBBERY
AND SLAYING OF LONG ISLAND CITY DRY CLEANING PLANT OWNER**

Faces Up to 25 Years to Life in Prison

Queens District Attorney Richard A. Brown announced today that a 30-year-old Farmingdale man has been convicted of armed robbery, murder and evidence tampering in the October 2004 payroll robbery and shooting death of his former boss – the co-owner of the Red Cap Valet dry cleaning plant in Long Island City, Queens.

District Attorney Brown said, “The defendant, motivated by greed, had masterminded the armed robbery that led to the murder of 52-year-old businessman Bruce Levy, who was also a husband and grandfather. Even after Mr. Levy’s tragic death, the defendant thought he could escape justice for his actions by fleeing to Florida. He was gravely mistaken – as he found out when police arrested him on a warrant in Orlando, Florida shortly after the murder. The crimes of which he has now been convicted were senseless and shocking and warrant imposition of a maximum prison sentence.”

The District Attorney identified the defendant as Jerome Fletcher, 30, of 54 Baiting Place in Farmingdale, Long Island. Fletcher, who worked at Red Cap Valet dry cleaning between September 2003 and March 2004, was convicted last night of second-degree murder, first-degree robbery, second-degree criminal possession of a weapon and tampering with physical evidence following a two-week jury trial. Queens Supreme Court Justice Robert J. Hanophy, who presided at trial, set sentencing for December 18, 2006. The defendant faces up to 25 years to life in prison.

The District Attorney said that, according to trial testimony, Fletcher drove himself and an alleged accomplice – Denworth Davidson, 23, of 963 East 78 Street in Brooklyn – to the Red Cap Valet – located at 35-45 35th Street in Long Island City – at about 12:25 p.m. on October 7, 2004. Exiting the vehicle, the defendant Davidson allegedly robbed Bruce Levy of more than \$10,000 in cash and fatally shot him, striking him in the throat and arm. Davidson then allegedly fled the scene in the vehicle that Fletcher was driving.

District Attorney Brown said that, a week prior to the robbery and murder, Fletcher had confirmed the payroll time and delivery information with another alleged accomplice – Davia Gabriel, 28, of 926 East 102 Street in Brooklyn, who was employed at the dry cleaning plant and was allegedly aware of Fletcher’s plan to rob the victim.

The District Attorney said that Fletcher’s girlfriend – Stacey Whittaker, 30, also of 54 Baiting Place in Farmingdale – lent her car, a dark grey Honda, to him on the morning of October 7, 2004, and that five days later, on October 12th, she received \$4,000 in cash from Fletcher, which she deposited in her account at the Rockville Centre bank branch where she was employed. Thereafter, she withdrew the same amount of money and gave it to Fletcher. On October 17th, she again lent him her car so that he could gather his belongings before leaving for Florida.

District Attorney Brown said that Whittaker pleaded guilty to first-and third-degree hindering prosecution on March 22, 2005, before Acting Queens Supreme Court Justice Dorothy Chin Brandt and is scheduled to be sentenced on December 4, 2006. The cases against Davidson and Gabriel are presently pending in Queens Supreme Court. A fifth defendant charged in the case – Mozart Findlay, 29, no known address, pleaded guilty to felony conspiracy in the fourth degree on July 14, 2005, and is awaiting sentencing.

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The investigation was conducted by Detective Joseph Saccone of the 114th Precinct Detective Squad under the supervision of Lieutenant Brian Maguire, Squad Commander, and the overall supervision of Chief of Detectives George F. Brown.

Assistant District Attorney Robin D. Leopold, Deputy Chief of the District Attorney's Kew Gardens I Bureau, prosecuted the case under the supervision of Assistant District Attorney Francesco Catarisano, Bureau Chief and the overall supervision of Senior Executive Assistant District Attorney for Trials James C. Quinn and Deputy Executive Assistant District Attorneys for Trials John H. Larsen and Robert J. Masters.

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Note to Editors: Press release e-version posted on www.queensda.org