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June 30, 2026

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

MCCARTHY SENTENCED TO 12 TO 16 YEARS IN 2018 COLD CASE

TOLEDO, Ohio – Lucas County Prosecuting Attorney Julia R. Bates announced that Judge Gary G. Cook sentenced Shelby McCarthy to 12 to 16 years in prison on June 30, 2026, in the 2018 cold case homicide of Steve Ricks, 68, in Lucas County Common Pleas Court case No. CR2025-01509.

Pursuant to *North Carolina v. Alford*, McCarthy entered guilty pleas on May 20, 2026, to aggravated robbery and involuntary manslaughter.

McCarthy, 33, received four years in prison on Count 2, aggravated robbery, and eight years on Count 4, involuntary manslaughter. At sentencing, the State of Ohio dismissed counts 1, 3, 5 and 6. The sentences will run consecutively for a total prison term of 12 to 16 years.

The Toledo Police Department reopened the investigation in October 2024 to review previously collected evidence and determine whether advances in forensic testing, including DNA analysis and genetic genealogy, could help identify the person responsible. Ricks died after suffering at least 11 chop wounds from an ax. Investigators recovered the bloodied ax wrapped in a sheet, but the large amount of the victim's blood at the scene complicated forensic testing by the Ohio Bureau of Criminal Investigation. McCarthy was not interviewed during the initial 2018 investigation because she left Toledo and moved to Michigan before investigators identified her as a person of interest. After reopening the case, detectives located and arrested McCarthy in Hudson, Mich., on Nov. 7, 2024.

During the investigation, McCarthy's former boyfriend told investigators that she came home one night covered in blood and in possession of the victim's vehicle.

"This was a brutal murder, and there was never any indication of self-defense," Bates said. "We appreciate the Toledo Police Department's commitment to this case and its continued investigation until those responsible were held accountable."

Assistant Prosecutor Erin Kennedy and Chief of Special Units Michael Loisel led the case for the Lucas County Prosecutor's Office.

About the Lucas County Prosecutor's Office

The Lucas County Prosecutor's Office pursues justice, safeguards our community and advocates for victims. We balance accountability with individual rights, partnering with law enforcement to ensure public safety and fair governance. We are committed to integrity, outreach and justice for all.

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