

Brandon man pleads guilty in attacks on blacks

Contributed by JACK ELLIOTT JR.
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The death of James Craig Anderson, who was beaten and run over in Jackson on June 26, 2011, sparked the charges against a group of young whites. Anderson, a 47-year-old auto plant worker, was run down by a pickup truck outside a Jackson hotel.

Prosecutors said Dominick did not participate in the Anderson incident but was part of other group attacks. Dominick was immediately turned over to U.S. Marshals Thursday.

Prosecutors said starting about April 1, 2011, the group of white young men and women would drive from the majority-white suburbs of Rankin County into the majority-black capital city of Jackson, seeking black people to verbally harass and physically assault, and that they would later boast about the attacks. They would target people who appeared to be homeless or under the influence of drugs or alcohol, believing that such victims would be less likely to fight back or to report attacks to police.

In December, William Montgomery pleaded guilty in the death of Anderson, and Jonathan Gaskamp admitted to two federal hate crime charges in attacks on other blacks in Jackson.

Prosecutors said the group included Montgomery, Gaskamp and the three men who previously pleaded guilty in Anderson's death: Deryl Dedmon, Dylan Butler and John Aaron Rice. Sentencing is later for all five men.

Dominick appeared before Reeves dressed in a green polo shirt and light brown slacks. He was fidgety throughout the hour-long court hearing _ frequently putting his hands in his pockets, rubbing his face with his hands, stifling a couple of yawns and turning around to look at

his family.

He answered the judge's questions with simple "Yes, Your honor" and "No, Your honor" and made no other statement during the proceedings.

Prosecutors said Dominick threw bottles and used sling shots with metal ball bearings against blacks. Dominick told Reeves the allegations were true.

Reeves told Dominick that even with the guilty plea he "has a chance to change the direction of your life."

Police have said at least seven people were there before dawn on June 26, 2011, when Anderson was beaten and run over, including two teenage girls who were in the truck with Dedmon. They found Anderson at a west Jackson hotel. Rice and Dedmon assaulted Anderson while others stayed in the vehicles, prosecutors said.

A video from a hotel surveillance camera shows Rice, Butler and two others in a white Jeep Cherokee leaving the hotel parking lot at 5:05 a.m. Less than 20 seconds later, Dedmon's green Ford F-250 backs up and then lunges forward. Anderson's shirt is illuminated in the headlights before he disappears under the vehicle next to the curb.

Dedmon, Butler and Rice pleaded guilty to federal hate crime charges in March. Dedmon also pleaded guilty to state murder and hate crime charges and was given two life sentences. Federal prosecutors have said Dedmon, Rice and Butler were cooperating in the continuing investigation of Anderson's death.