

Grange sentencing delayed

Second delay in as many weeks

Statesman Examiner, By Jodi Miller

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The sentencing of convicted double-murderer John D. Grange, 26, has been delayed—a second time—until the morning of April 20.

“It’s a complex sentencing with a lot at stake, and it requires a lot of preparation,” defense attorney Robert Simeone told Superior Court Judge Rebecca Baker.

Grange faces 50 to 63 years for his conviction in the shooting of Joshua T. Schaefer and Nicholas D. Kaiser, both 21, southwest of Northport last June.

Kaiser was an LSD dealer arrested by Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) agents last April. He became a federally protected witness after turning in some of his drug connections in exchange for special consideration in his own sentencing. Kaiser’s actions led to a \$100,000 hit on his head, the origins of which remains untraced.

Schaefer was a friend visiting Kaiser, but had also given the DEA, in a separate incident, the name of a . . .

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. . . level, because the victims were considered agents of the federal government at the time of the murders, said Stevens County Prosecuting Attorney Jerry Wetle.

Wetle said that he doesn’t know whether the federal government plans to press their own charges against Grange.

Tom Schaefer, the father of victim Joshua Schaefer, believes the most recent sentencing delay stems from Grange’s rumored attempts to strike a deal with the federal government in hopes of a lighter sentence.

“I’m not happy that he keeps getting these delays and breaks,” Schaefer said. “It just outrages me that they would consider making a deal with a cold blooded killer. This wasn’t a drug deal gone bad; this was an execution.”

“(The sentencing) is not something we’re looking forward to,” he continued, “It’s just painful. Its amazing the level of pain you can have, and it’s not something that goes away.”

Wetle said that “no deal has been made of the state level. With respect to the federal level, we have no idea.”

Wetle added that, even if a deal were struck on the federal level, the defense could only request that Judge Baker take Grange’s cooperation into consideration.

Grange was denied a motion for a new trial and arrest of the judgment last week.

Wetle said he plans to ask for the maximum 63-year sentence, Simeone could not be reached for comment.