

Man who set up drug deal convicted of murder

AKRON — An Akron man was convicted Monday of robbing and murdering a man who met him to buy drugs. The encounter followed two other attempts by the victim to buy drugs from his shooter.

A Summit County jury found Chad Stephens, 22, of Baird Street, guilty of murder and two counts of aggravated robbery for the Aug. 31 slaying of Kim Slayko. Prosecutors said Ste-

phens initially called Slayko to set up a meeting to sell him an opiate derivative. But Stephens did not show up.

"When Slayko called him to see where he was, Stephens claimed he wanted to make sure Slayko was not a police officer. He then set up a second meeting," a prosecutor's news release said. "When Slayko arrived at the meeting, he was jumped by two men who attempted to rob

him." Undaunted, Slayko contacted Stephens and set up a third meeting, this time on Baughman Avenue in Akron.

Prosecutors said that this time, Stephens was waiting when Slayko arrived, took him behind a house and shot and killed him.

Summit County Common Pleas Judge Mary Margaret Rowlands will sentence Stephens on Wednesday, May 30.

COMMUNITY

CLEVELAND

Road to Metropark reopened

Hogsback Lane, the steep, nearly half-mile-long road linking Riverside Drive with the Cleveland Metroparks' Rocky River Reservation, reopened May 1 after being closed for a year, Metroparks spokeswoman Jane Christyson said. City and park officials closed the upper third of the road last year on April 8 after land sloughed, causing a guardrail to slip 4 feet down a slope that eventually leads to the Rocky River. Only pedestrians and cyclists could use the road until 35,000 cubic yards of dirt and construction debris was removed from a Fairview Hospital expansion site by Marous Brothers to rebuild the failed slope.

NORTHEAST OHIO

Free Legal Aid clinics planned

The Legal Aid Society of Cleveland is holding three clinics across Greater Cleveland at which people can get free legal advice. Legal Aid staff will answer questions from 4 to 6 p.m. Tuesday at the South Euclid Community Center, 1370 Victory Drive, South Euclid. This clinic will focus primarily on foreclosure. Staff members will be available from 2 to 4 p.m. Thursday, May 24, at the West Side Community House, 9300 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, and Catholic Charities' Lorain Family Center, 203 West Eighth St., Lorain. All clinics are first come, first served. Please bring all relevant paperwork.

BERNSTEIN

FROM B1

Young author is source of inspiration

Her book, she says, "takes you definitely on a journey of finding yourself, of finding what you want to do. It covers everything you can think of; it has a bit about family, a bit about love."

Hopefully readers will come out on the other end with a better understanding of who they are, Taylor adds.

She was encouraged to write down her inspirational sayings by a mentor, Ellen Burts-Cooper, managing partner of Improve Consulting and Training Group, who knew Taylor to be a gifted writer.

"When I read them, I thought,

"This is really good," says Burts-Cooper.

So she put up the money to have the book published. AuthorHouse, the publisher, arranged to have it sold on Amazon so it could reach a wide audience.

"I'm extremely impressed," says Bedford High Principal Samuel Vawters, who is excited and amazed that he was able to buy a student's book online. He intends to quote from Taylor's book during commencement.

There's "wisdom, truth and substance" in Taylor's writings, says Burts-Cooper, who lately has begun dropping Taylorisms into her speeches and finds they're always well received.

Many tips have a common-sense ring of familiarity, yet Taylor has put her own spin on them.

It's never too late to become

who you've always wanted to be.

Once you realize your full potential, you won't want to live a life short of it.

What's been the toughest lesson for Taylor to teach herself? Not trying to control everything, she answers.

"I keep learning this over and over: It's out of your control what teachers will do, what will be on the test, how it's graded. You have to do your best," she says.

"You have to put the effort into it, and what they do is up to them."

That's one of her many Taylor-made truisms that she hopes will help others.

To reach Margaret Bernstein: mbernstein@plaind.com, 216-999-4876
Previous columns online: cleveland.com/columns