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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

From: Eric M. Hoffman, Prosecuting Attorney
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Date: February 17, 2022

**PROSECUTOR FILES MURDER CHARGES RELATED TO 2016
DISAPPEARANCE OF DELAWARE COUNTY MAN**

Muncie Indiana – On today's date Delaware County Prosecutor Eric M. Hoffman filed charges relating to the 2016 disappearance of Mark Trent (DOB February 19, 1961). Prosecutor Hoffman filed the following charges against Ian Shelden (DOB March 20, 1980):

- Count 1: Murder, a Felony;
- Count 2: Murder, a Felony;¹
- Count 3: Obstruction of Justice, a Level 6 Felony
- Count 4: Auto theft, a Level 6 Felony
- Count 5: Fraud, a Level 6 Felony
- Count 6: Theft, a Level 6 Felony

A file marked copy of the charging information and the Affidavit of Probable Cause for Arrest is attached to this release. The Honorable Thomas A. Cannon Jr., sitting Judge of the Delaware Circuit Court 4, issued an arrest warrant for Mr. Shelden. Judge Cannon ordered that Shelden be held without bail. Currently, Mr. Shelden is being held in custody in the state of Tennessee on the charge of abuse of a corpse. The process to extradite him to face these charges in Delaware County is underway. The regular sitting Judge of the Delaware Circuit Court 4, the Honorable Judge John M. Feick will set an initial hearing as soon as Mr. Shelden has been extradited back to Delaware County and is in the custody of the Delaware County Jail.

¹ It is important to note that the State is not alleging that the defendant killed two (2) different people. Rather, Counts 1 and 2 both charge the alleged murder of the same victim. The different counts simply charge two different sections of the murder statute. Count 2 is commonly referred to as "felony murder" which is a killing that occurred during the commission or attempted commission of a certain felony offense.

Pursuant to Indiana law:

- Murder is punishable by 45 – 65 years in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine.
- Each Level 6 Felony is punishable by 6 months – 2.5 years in prison and up to a \$10,000 fine.

It is important to remember that any accusation that someone has committed a crime, an arrest and/or the filing of a criminal charge is simply an allegation and is not evidence of guilt. All suspects are presumed innocent unless and until proven guilty beyond a reasonable doubt at trial. The ethical rules for prosecutors in Indiana prohibit further comment on this matter. At this time, there will be no further comment.

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STATE OF INDIANA)
) SS:
COUNTY OF DELAWARE)

IN THE DELAWARE CIRCUIT COURT 4
CAUSE NUMBER 18C04-2202-MR-

AFFIDAVIT FOR PROBABLE CAUSE

STATE OF INDIANA

VS

IAN J. SHELDEN

Count I:
MURDER
I.C. 35-42-1-1(1)
a Felony

Count II:
MURDER
I.C. 35-42-1-1(2)
a Felony

Count III:
OBSTRUCTION OF JUSTICE
I.C. 35-44.1-2-2(a)(3)
a Level 6 Felony

Count IV:
AUTO THEFT
I.C. 35-43-4-2.5(b)(1)
a Level 6 Felony

Count V:
FRAUD
I.C. 35-43-5-4(1)(A) and (1)(C)
a Level 6 Felony

County VI:
THEFT
I.C. 35-43-4-2(a)(1)(A)
a Level 6 Felony

The undersigned deposes and says upon information and belief that Ian James Shelden has committed the offenses of: Murder, a Felony; Murder a Felony; Obstruction of Justice, a Level 6 Felony; Auto Theft, a Level 6 Felony; Fraud, a Level 6 Felony; and Theft, a Level 6 Felony, and in support thereof says as follows:

1. This Affiant is a Deputy Sheriff with the Delaware County Sheriff's Office and has been for five and a half years (5.5) years. This Affiant has been assigned to the Criminal Investigations Division for one and a half (1.5) years.

2. On March 31, 2016 the Delaware County Sheriff's Office, Delaware County, Indiana, was contacted by a family member of an individual named Mark Trent ("**Mr. Trent**"). Mr. Trent's family reported concerns that Mr. Trent had gone missing. At that time, Mr. Trent had not been in contact with family or friends for approximately one (1) month.
3. Later that day, March 31, 2016, Sheriff's Deputies responded to Mr. Trent's home, 3612 W. 32nd Street, Muncie, Delaware County, Indiana, 47302 to investigate a complaint that Mr. Trent was missing. When Deputies arrived at Mr. Trent's residence, the family members on scene advised that there were several items still at Mr. Trent's residence which they believed was unusual for Mr. Trent to have left behind if he had left on his own volition. Deputies confirmed that several essential items were left at the residence including Mr. Trent's two dogs. Due to the condition of the home, it appeared that the dogs had indeed been left for an extended period of time. At that time, Mr. Trent's vehicle, a maroon Dodge Ram pickup truck was missing. In addition, Mr. Trent's wallet was located at the residence, however, the wallet was empty.
4. Investigators also discovered that during the month of March, 2016, Mr. Trent had missed previously scheduled medical appointments.
5. During the initial investigation, Deputies spoke with individuals who lived in the area of Mr. Trent's residence. These individual(s) advised that approximately a month prior to March 31, 2016 the "vehicles disappeared" from the residence and it was "like they moved out overnight." Investigators learned that during the later-months of 2015 two individuals were living with Mr. Trent, specifically, Ian and Tracy Shelden. After a mutual agreement, the couple moved away from Mr. Trent's residence in December of 2015. At the time of the initial investigation neither Ian nor Tracy had been seen since Mr. Trent's disappearance.
6. During the investigation, Investigators with the Delaware County Sheriff's Office discovered that Mr. Trent's bank accounts were still active. There were several purchases and withdrawals from his accounts during the months of March 2016 – August 2016 which were occurring in Indiana, Tennessee, Florida, and Michigan. At that time, Investigators were not able to identify the subject(s) who were using Mr. Trent's cards, however, after reviewing surveillance footage it was not believed to be Mr. Trent.
7. Investigators were unable to locate Ian Shelden and Tracy Shelden around the time of Mr. Trent's disappearance in 2016.
8. A Facebook post was made on March 3, 2016 on Mr. Trent's page that, in summary, stated that he was reevaluating his life and taking a break from everyone, possibly permanently.
9. On or about October 15, 2021, Mr. Trent's niece, Shannon Slayback, reached out to the Delaware County Sheriff's Office Investigations Division. Mrs. Slayback stated

that she believed Ian and Tracy Shelden were involved with Mr. Trent's disappearance. Following the contact from Mrs. Slayback, Investigators learned that Ian and Tracy Shelden were likely in Tennessee.

10. With the assistance of the Tennessee Bureau of Investigations, Investigators with Delaware County Sheriff's Office were able to find Tracy Shelden in Fentress County, Tennessee. On October 18, 2021, this Affiant and Investigator John Branson of the Delaware County Sheriff's Office (collectively "**Investigators**"), traveled to Fentress County, Tennessee and spoke with Tracy Shelden.
11. Tracy Shelden told Investigators that she and Ian Shelden lived with Mark Trent in Muncie for a short time in 2015. However, after a "falling out," she and Ian moved out of the residence. Tracy Shelden informed Investigators that she and Ian lived in a vehicle for a short time, but stayed away from Mr. Trent. However, Tracy stated that there was a time after they moved out that her and Ian went back to Mr. Trent's residence. Tracy recalled that herself, Ian and Mr. Trent were in the house together when Ian asked her to go to the car. Tracy then went outside to her vehicle and waited. Tracy stated that she waited outside for a long time, and eventually Ian came out alone and told her she needed to leave. When Tracy asked why, Ian would not tell her. Tracy then left Mr. Trent's property. Later the next morning, Ian and Tracy met up again, at which time Ian was driving the truck that "[Mr. Trent] usually drove." Tracy stated that she never saw another individual riding with Ian. Tracy stated at that point, she and Ian drove to Tennessee and met up with an acquaintance of Ian's whom she believed was named Ryan Winningham. Ian and Ryan then left together and were gone between three (3) and five (5) hours. When Ian returned he was no longer in possession of Mr. Trent's truck. Tracy stated that she did not know what happened to Mr. Trent's truck. After the interview Investigators showed Tracy two (2) photos of surveillance footage collected from ATMs where Mr. Trent's bank card had been used. In both instances, Tracy identified the individual in the photos as Ian Shelden although in one of the photos Ian was dressed as a woman.
12. Investigators were able to learn the address where Ian Shelden was staying in Tennessee. Investigators traveled to that address and made contact with Ian Shelden. On October 18, 2021, Investigators took Ian Shelden to the Fentress County Sheriff's Office, Criminal Investigations Unit and spoke with him.
13. Initially, Ian told Investigators that Mr. Trent had moved to Florida and he'd never heard from him again. Ian also admitted to taking the Maroon Dodge to Tennessee with Mr. Trent's permission. Ian was supposed to bring the truck back to Muncie, but never did. Investigators showed Ian surveillance photos from an ATM where Mr. Trent's bank card was used in Tennessee on March 28, 2016. Ian confirmed it was him, but would not confirm that the individual dressed as a woman in another surveillance photo on April 1, 2016 was him. Investigators again asked Ian what happened to Mr. Trent. Ian admitted that he and Mr. Trent did have an argument that resulted in Ian and Tracy moving out of Mr. Trent's residence. Ian became emotional and told Investigators that when he and Tracy left Muncie for Tennessee, Mr. Trent actually went with them. Mr. Trent had not gone to Florida as initially told

by Ian. Instead, Ian said that Mr. Trent, whom was riding in the maroon Dodge with him, unexpectedly died during the trip due to a drug overdose. Ian advised that he then freaked out and attempted to hide Mr. Trent's body.

14. Later on October 18, 2021, Ian took Investigators to the area where he claimed he had disposed of Mr. Trent's body; however, Investigators were unable to locate Mr. Trent's body. Investigators spoke with Tracy Sheldon again. Tracy maintained that Mr. Trent never traveled to Tennessee with Ian and her.
15. On October 19, 2021, Investigators went to an address where in Tennessee where Ian was staying. There Investigators spoke with Ian's mother and her husband. Ian's mother told investigators that Ian had been up all night crying and "going on about Muncie" and not wanting to go to jail. Investigators also conducted a second interview with Ian Sheldon. During this second interview, Ian gave a different account concerning the death of Mr. Trent. Ian now stated that he and Tracy went to Mr. Trent's house located in Muncie, Delaware County Indiana prior to leaving for Tennessee. While there, Ian and Mr. Trent talked about Ian and Tracy moving back in and smoked "crack" [cocaine] together. According to Ian Sheldon, during this time, Ian had asked Tracy to wait outside in the vehicle. Ian advised that at some point he and Mr. Trent went to a back bedroom where Ian used to stay. Ian alleged that while in that bedroom Mr. Trent tried to seduce him. Ian alleges that he rejected Mr. Trent's advance and attempted to leave the room. While leaving the bedroom, Ian alleges that Mr. Trent grabbed his belt loop. In response to this, Ian stated that he grabbed a "tent stake" nearby and hit Mr. Trent in the face causing Mr. Trent to immediately start bleeding. Ian described the stake as being nearly two (2) feet long with a round top. According to Ian, Mr. Trent then asked why Ian had struck him. Ian said he then struck Mr. Trent again with the stake causing a "hole" in Mr. Trent's head. Ian advised that Mr. Trent fell to the floor and was bleeding. At that time, Ian went outside and told Tracy to leave. Ian stated that he then went back inside and took steps to conceal the murder. Specifically, Ian confessed that he covered Mr. Trent's bleeding head with a bag and placed Mr. Trent in a closet. Ian further confessed that he then cut a section of clean carpet and replaced the carpet that Mr. Trent had bled on. Ian then took a shower and washed his clothes at Mr. Trent's residence. Ian confessed that after killing Mr. Trent, he stole Mr. Trent's vehicle and went to WalMart in Muncie, Delaware County, Indiana. While there, Ian purchased several items with Mr. Trent's debit card that Ian had stolen. Specifically, Ian remembered that he purchased a large "tote." Ian then went back to Mr. Trent's residence and put Mr. Trent's body into the tote that he had just purchased from WalMart in Muncie. Ian placed the tote containing the body of Mr. Trent in Mr. Trent's vehicle and left the residence. Ian advised that he then met up with Tracy, and the two (2) of them drove to Tennessee in separate vehicles. Ian told Investigators after getting to Tennessee, he attempted to dispose of Mr. Trent's body. Specifically, Ian confessed that he had attempted to burn Mr. Trent's remains. When that proved to be unsuccessful, Ian dropped Mr. Trent's remains from the side of a steep mountain overhang.

16. On October 19, 2021, Ian took investigators to the location where he disposed of Mr. Trent's body. Investigators were able to locate a bag in that area that contained, what appeared to be, a large number of human bones right in the area where Ian directed investigators.
17. After the discovery of the remains, Investigators spoke with Ian Sheldon again. During this interview Ian Sheldon provided additional information about Mr. Trent's murder. Ian confessed during this final interview that while at Mr. Trent's house, 3612 W. 32nd Street, Muncie, Delaware County, Indiana, Mr. Trent was on the ground "flailing his legs" and "bubbling his words" when Ian hit Mr. Trent a third time, in the head, with the long heavy stake. Ian confessed that he saw the hole in Mr. Trent's head and that Mr. Trent never said another word.
18. The bones recovered were subsequently forensically identified as the physical remains of Mr. Trent. After the body was identified as Mr. Trent, the remains were examined by Fentress County Medical Examiner Dr. Lauren Havrilla and forensic anthropologist, Dr. Murray Marks, PhD, who determined that Mr. Trent had died as a result of blunt force injuries to the head. Additionally, some remains showed evidence of thermal injuries or "charring." In the report submitted by Dr. Havrilla, the cause of death of Mr. Trent is listed as blunt force injuries of the head. The manner of death Mr. Trent is listed as Homicide.
19. Ian Sheldon is currently being held in custody in Fentress County, Tennessee, on a \$55,000 bond for allegations of Abuse of a Corpse.
20. Based on this information it is requested that a warrant be issued for the arrest of Ian James Sheldon for the crimes of Murder, a Felony; Murder, a Felony; Obstruction of Justice, a Level 6 Felony; Auto Theft, a Level 6 Felony; Fraud, a Level 6 Felony; and Theft, a Level 6 Felony.

I affirm under the penalties of perjury that the foregoing representations are true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Dated this 16th day of February, 2022.

/s/ Matthew Kubiak
Matthew Kubiak
Investigator
Delaware County Sheriff's Office

Reviewed By:

/s/ Jagen P. Arnold
Jagen Arnold, #35159-18
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit
State of Indiana

STATE OF INDIANA) IN THE DELAWARE CIRCUIT COURT 4
) SS:
COUNTY OF DELAWARE) CAUSE NUMBER. 18C04-2202-MR

INFORMATION:

STATE OF INDIANA

VS

IAN JAMES SHELDEN

136 S Crabtree St
Jamestown, TN 38556

DOB: 3/20/1980
SSN: XXX-XX-8755

Count 1:
Murder
I.C. 35-42-1-1(1)
a Felony

Count 1:

The undersigned says that between March 1, 2016 and March 5, 2016 in Delaware County, State of Indiana, Ian James Shelden did knowingly kill another human being, namely Mark Trent, contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-42-1-1(1) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.

ERIC M. HOFFMAN
Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana

BY: /s/ Jagen Arnold
Jagen Arnold 35159-18
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana

STATE OF INDIANA)
) SS:
COUNTY OF DELAWARE)

IN THE DELAWARE CIRCUIT COURT 4

CAUSE NUMBER. 18C04-2202-MR

INFORMATION:

STATE OF INDIANA

VS

IAN JAMES SHELDEN

136 S Crabtree St
Jamestown, TN 38556

DOB: 3/20/1980
SSN: XXX-XX-8755

Count 2:
Murder
I.C. 35-42-1-1(2)
a Felony

Count 2:

The undersigned says that between March 1, 2016 and March 5, 2016 in Delaware County, State of Indiana, Ian James Shelden, did kill another human being, namely Mark Trent; while committing or attempting to commit Armed Robbery, contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-42-1-1(2) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.

ERIC M. HOFFMAN
Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana

BY: /s/ Jagen Arnold
Jagen Arnold 35159-18
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana

STATE OF INDIANA) IN THE DELAWARE CIRCUIT COURT 4
) SS:
COUNTY OF DELAWARE) CAUSE NUMBER. 18C04-2202-MR

INFORMATION:

STATE OF INDIANA

VS

IAN JAMES SHELDEN

136 S Crabtree St
Jamestown, TN 38556

DOB: 3/20/1980
SSN: XXX-XX-8755

Count 3:
Obstruction of Justice
I.C. 35-44.1-2-2(a)(3)
a Level 6 Felony

Count 3:

The undersigned says that between March 1, 2016 and March 5, 2016 in Delaware County, State of Indiana, Ian James Shelden did alter, damage or remove evidence with the intent to prevent said item or items from being produced or used as evidence in an official proceeding or investigation, contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-44.1-2-2(a)(3) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.

ERIC M. HOFFMAN
Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana

BY: /s/ Jagen Arnold
Jagen Arnold 35159-18
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana

STATE OF INDIANA) IN THE DELAWARE CIRCUIT COURT 4
) SS:
COUNTY OF DELAWARE) CAUSE NUMBER. 18C04-2202-MR

INFORMATION:

STATE OF INDIANA

VS

IAN JAMES SHELDEN

136 S Crabtree St
Jamestown, TN 38556

DOB: 3/20/1980
SSN: XXX-XX-8755

Count 4:
Auto Theft
I.C. 35-43-4-2.5(b)(1)
a Level 6 Felony

Count 4:

The undersigned says that between March 1, 2016 and March 5, 2016 in Delaware County, State of Indiana, Ian James Shelden did knowingly exert unauthorized control over the motor vehicle of Deborah Warren, with the intent to deprive Deborah Warren of the vehicle's value or use, contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-43-4-2.5(b) (1) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.

ERIC M. HOFFMAN
Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana

BY: /s/ Jagen Arnold
Jagen Arnold 35159-18
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana

STATE OF INDIANA)
) SS:
COUNTY OF DELAWARE)

IN THE DELAWARE CIRCUIT COURT 4
CAUSE NUMBER. 18C04-2202-MR

INFORMATION:

STATE OF INDIANA

VS

IAN JAMES SHELDEN

136 S Crabtree St
Jamestown, TN 38556

DOB: 3/20/1980
SSN: XXX-XX-8755

Count 5:
Fraud
I.C. 35-43-5-4(1)
a Level 6 Felony

Count 5:

The undersigned says that between March 1, 2016 and March 31, 2016 in Delaware County, State of Indiana, Ian James Shelden did with the intent to defraud Mark Trent obtain property, by using a credit card, knowing that said credit card was unlawfully obtained or retained and/or using, without consent, a credit card, that was issued to another person, namely Mark Trent, contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-43-5-4(1) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.

ERIC M. HOFFMAN
Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana

BY: /s/ Jagen Arnold
Jagen Arnold 35159-18
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana

STATE OF INDIANA) IN THE DELAWARE CIRCUIT COURT 4
) SS:
COUNTY OF DELAWARE) CAUSE NUMBER. 18C04-2202-MR

INFORMATION:

STATE OF INDIANA

VS

IAN JAMES SHELDEN

136 S Crabtree St
Jamestown, TN 38556

DOB: 3/20/1980

SSN: XXX-XX-8755

Count 6:

Theft

I.C. 35-43-4-2(a) and I.C. 35-43-4-2(a)(1)
(A)

a Level 6 Felony

Count 6:

The undersigned says that between March 1, 2016 and March 31, 2016 in Delaware County, State of Indiana, Ian James Shelden did knowingly exert unauthorized control over the property of Mark Trent, with the intent to deprive Mark Trent of any part of the use or value of the property, said property having a value of at least seven hundred fifty dollars and less than the value of fifty thousand dollars, contrary to the form of the statutes in such cases made and provided by I.C. 35-43-4-2(a) and I.C. 35-43-4-2(a)(1)(A) and against the peace and dignity of the State of Indiana.

ERIC M. HOFFMAN
Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana

BY: /s/ Jagen Arnold
Jagen Arnold 35159-18
Deputy Prosecuting Attorney
46th Judicial Circuit of Indiana