



Yager sentenced to life for wife's 2008 murder

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By **JANELLE STECKLEIN**

A Randall County jury Thursday sentenced a former Pantex federal agent to life in prison for the 2008 murder of his wife.

Randall County Criminal District Attorney James Farren said Jeff David Yager, 28, will have to serve 40 years before he's eligible for parole. It was the maximum sentence he could have received for killing his 26-year-old wife, Amy, in September 2008.

"The jury did a great job," Farren said. "They were asked to decide at punishment whether this was an act committed in the heat of the moment, in other words a crime of passion."

The jury determined the death of Amy Yager was not a crime of passion, he said.

Farren said Yager contended he was shooting at an intruder following a night out on the town with friends. Only later, Yager claimed, did he realize it was his wife he had shot twice.

The jury, Farren said, didn't buy his explanation.

"There was no other evidence of an intruder other than his vague suggestion that that occurred," he said.

Farren said Jeff Yager's explanation failed to explain why he shot Amy Yager from about two feet away and then placed the gun against the back of her head and pulled the trigger, killing her. The autopsy also indicated Amy Yager had bruises and abrasions on her body that were inflicted shortly before she died.

Authorities said Yager killed his wife then walked more than a mile to a friend's house to report the killing. The friend drove Jeff Yager back to the home on Hatfield Circle, behind Amarillo High School, where he found Amy Yager dead.

There was no indication that Jeff Yager was intoxicated at the time, Farren said.

Amy Yager was a student at Amarillo College. Jeff Yager was a federal agent who worked at the Pantex Plant outside Amarillo, assigned to protect shipments of nuclear weapons and materials. He worked with the Office of Secure Transportation Central Command in Amarillo and held top security clearance. Yager was removed from duty and his access to Pantex and other nuclear weapon sites suspended.

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