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**HINDS COUNTY
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ROBERT SHULER SMITH, D.A.**

PRESS RELEASE

Ridgeland Resident George E. Newell Jr. Sentenced

July 21, 2014

For Immediate Release

(Jackson, Miss) Hinds County District Attorney Robert Shuler Smith announced this morning, Ridgeland Resident George E. Newell Jr. (age 42) was sentenced to 20 years for Manslaughter and 20 years for Felony Leaving the Scene of an Accident. The sentences were ordered to be served concurrently in the custody of MDOC by the Honorable Judge Winsted Kidd. Today's sentencing was preceded by Newell's open plea to these charges in early June.

The facts, as stated upon the guilty plea in June, describe the events that caused to the death of 13 year old Ray Echols. On the night of November 17, 2011, around 8:37 pm, Ray Echols and a friend were riding their bicycles travelling south on Watkins Drive when George E. Newell Jr., while driving his vehicle, struck Ray Echols. This incident resulted in the death of Ray Echols. George E. Newell, Jr. failed to rendered assistance, or to notify the police, and left the scene.

"I am very pleased with the outstanding job my prosecutors did on behalf of Ray Echols, said Smith. "This was a major victory for little Ray Echols and his entire family." "I certainly hope the length of time imposed on the defendant for the untimely death of the victim, will rendered Ray Echols's family closure."