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Ex-cop guilty of murder and manslaughter in Floyd case

By amy forliti stephen groves and tammy webber associated press | WVDN APR 20, 2021



MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Former Minneapolis police Officer Derek Chauvin has been convicted of murder and manslaughter in the death of George Floyd, the explosive case that triggered worldwide protests, violence and a furious reexamination of racism and policing in the U.S.

The jury reached its verdict Tuesday after deliberating about 10 hours over two days in a city on edge against another outbreak of unrest.

Floyd died last May after Chauvin, a white officer, pinned his knee on or close to the 46-year-old Black man's neck for about 9 1/2 minutes.

THIS IS A BREAKING NEWS UPDATE. AP's earlier story follows below.

MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — The jury reached a verdict Tuesday at the murder trial of former Officer Derek Chauvin in the death of George Floyd, the Black man who was pinned to the pavement with a knee on his neck in a case that set off a furious reexamination of racism and policing in the U.S.

The verdict, arrived at after about 10 hours of deliberations over two days, was to be read late in the afternoon in a city on edge against the possibility of more unrest like that that erupted last spring.

The courthouse was ringed with concrete barriers and razor wire, and thousands of National Guard troops and law enforcement officers were brought in ahead of the verdict. Some businesses boarded up with plywood.

Floyd died last May after Chauvin, a 45-year-old now-fired white officer, pinned his knee on or close to the 46-year-old Black man's neck for about 9 1/2 minutes as Floyd gasped that he couldn't breathe and onlookers yelled at Chauvin to get off.

The jury, made up of six white people and six Black or multiracial people, weighed charges of second-degree unintentional murder, third-degree murder and second-degree manslaughter, with convictions on some, none or all of the charges possible. The most serious charge carries up to 40 years in prison.

The city has been on edge in recent days — not just over the Chauvin case but over the deadly police shooting of a 20-year-old Black man, Daunte Wright, in the nearby Minneapolis suburb of Brooklyn Center on April 11.

Earlier in the day Tuesday, President Joe Biden weighed in by saying he believes the case is "overwhelming." He said that he had spoken to Floyd's family on Monday and "can only imagine the pressure and anxiety they're feeling."

"They're a good family and they're calling for peace and tranquility no matter what that verdict is," Biden said. "I'm praying the verdict is the right verdict. I think it's overwhelming, in my view. I wouldn't say that unless the jury was sequestered now."

The president has repeatedly denounced Floyd's death but previously stopped short of commenting on the

trial itself.

Other politicians and ordinary citizens also offered their opinion as the jury was deliberating.

“It shouldn’t be really even questioned whether there will be an acquittal or a verdict that doesn’t meet the scale of the crime that was committed,” Rep. Ilhan Omar, a Democrat, said in Brooklyn Center. The congresswoman said the Chauvin case looks open-and-shut.

Guilty verdicts could mark a turning point in the fight for racial equality, she said.

“We are holding on to one another for support. Hopefully this verdict will come soon and the community will start the process of healing,” Omar said.

Woman Arrested After Attacking Police Officer

By autumn shelton wvdm | WVDN APR 20, 2021

A woman is in jail after attacking a member of the Pocahontas County Sheriff’s Department.

According to the criminal complaint, on April 18, officers served an emergency protective order on Kimshea Maria Rose Galford, 39, of Dunmore. While she was being served the order, Galford told officers that she had nowhere to go and asked if she could go to a family member’s house to see if they would take care of her dogs.

The officers stated that she could, and as they were waiting for her to return, they received a 911 call from a family member stating that Galford was there and threatening to commit suicide.

A short time later, Galford arrived back at the house and ran inside to get her pit bulls, the complaint states.

As officers were attempting to get her to leave the house, she continued to stand behind her dogs, refusing to comply with police orders.

When one officer was able to grab her arm, she allegedly “threw something at [the officer] and started swinging punches, then put her head down and got close enough to get a hold of [the officer’s] pants and crotch,” the complaint continues.

The officer then deployed a taser, hitting Galford on her head and again on her side. Another officer on the scene deployed a taser, as well, striking her twice. At this point, officers were able to place her in cuffs.

EMS arrived on scene and removed the taser probes. Galford was taken to Pocahontas Memorial Hospital and later transported to Tygart Valley Regional Jail to await arraignment.

Galford is charged with one misdemeanor count of violating a protective order, one misdemeanor count of battery on a police officer and one misdemeanor count of obstructing an officer.

The dogs were taken to a local animal shelter.

Smoot Elementary on Remote Learning for April 21

By Rebecca Stalnaker | WVDN APR 20, 2021



According to a release issued by Greenbrier County school officials, Smoot Elementary School will learn remotely on Wednesday, April 21. The reason for this is a COVID-19 case confirmation.

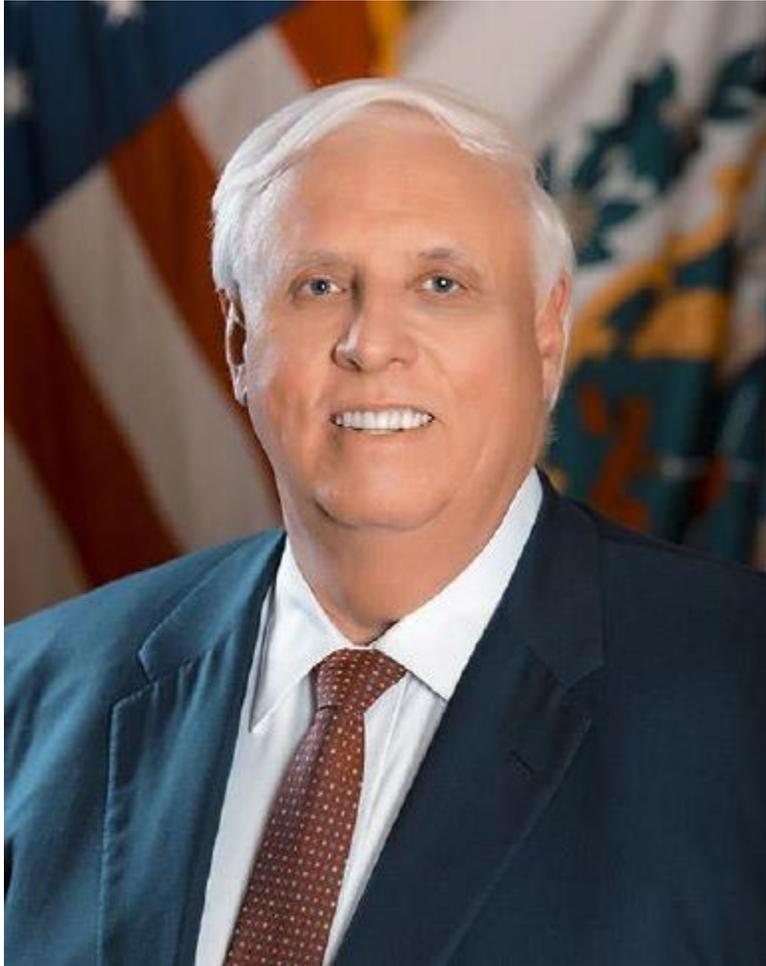
The release states that “an individual at Smoot Elementary School has tested positive for COVID-19.” It goes on to say that all students for that school will learn remotely on April 21 to allow for both contact tracing and sanitization of the school. In-person instruction will resume on Thursday, April 22.

At the end of the release, school officials state, “Due to the increased number of cases in our communities, we remind parents to be diligent in completing the daily screening checklist prior to each school day.”

The West Virginia Daily News will provide updates regarding the status of Smoot Elementary School’s learning model as additional details are made available.

Justice Clarifies COVID-Restrictions; Lifts Social Gathering Limitations

By Matthew Young | WVDN APR 20, 2021



During his Monday, April 19 coronavirus response media briefing, West Virginia Governor Jim Justice announced the signing of Executive Order 12-21.

According to a statement released by the governor's office, the new order clarifies "which previous executive orders pertaining to the COVID-19 pandemic remain in effect and which do not, while also updating certain regulations."

"Throughout the past year, I have signed a total of 91 executive orders to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic," Justice said during Monday's briefing. "These orders were absolutely necessary to keep our people safe, keep our businesses afloat, and keep us on the right track to beat this virus. As a result, we have led the nation over and over. But, it can be confusing for the public to keep track of all the different orders. So today, I am signing a new executive order that's cleaning up and doing away with a great, great many of the executive orders that have been in place."

Justice continued, "There was a lot of stuff that was very valuable when we put it in that has now outlived its time, and now it's time to move forward."

The governor also confirmed the removal of the restrictions imposed upon social gatherings and announced that a new exemption has been added to the indoor face-covering mandate. Under the guidelines outlined in the new executive order, those actively engaged in physical activity, such as indoor sports, need not wear a face covering.

"I am also leaving in place the requirement that all healthcare facilities and providers in our state remain vigilant with plans for surge capacity and PPE in case we ever need it again," Justice said.

The statement from the governor's office further explains, "several additional orders suspending regulations to make access to health care, business licensure and other aspects of life easier will also remain in effect."

The West Virginia Daily News will provide updates regarding the state's evolving pandemic guidelines as additional details are made available.

Freeze Watch For April 21 - 22

By Rebecca Stalnaker | WVDN APR 20, 2021



The National Weather Service in Blacksburg has issued a Freeze Watch for parts of West Virginia and Virginia. The Watch goes into effect late Wednesday night and lasts through Thursday morning.

Areas impacted in West Virginia include Eastern and Western Greenbrier County as well as Monroe, Summers and Mercer counties. In Virginia areas included are Bland, Smyth, Pulaski, Tazewell, Giles, Wythe, Montgomery, Carroll, Grayson, Graig, Floyd and Allegheny. According to the alert, this includes the following cities, Hinton, Lewisburg, Alderson, White Sulphur Springs, Rainelle, Hix, Flattop, Radford, Marion and Boone among others.

Temperatures are predicted to get as low as 28 degrees Fahrenheit. The alert states, "Freezing conditions could kill crops, other sensitive vegetation. Take steps now to protect tender plants."

The West Virginia Daily News and the Virginia Review will provide updates on this Freeze Watch as more information becomes available.

Walter Mondale, Carter's vice president, dies at 93

By doug glass associated press | WVDN APR 20, 2021



MINNEAPOLIS (AP) — Former Vice President Walter F. Mondale, a liberal icon who lost one of the most lopsided presidential elections after bluntly telling voters to expect a tax increase if he won, died Monday. He was 93. The death of the former senator, ambassador and Minnesota attorney general was announced in a statement from his family. No cause was cited.

Mondale followed the trail blazed by his political mentor, Hubert H. Humphrey, from Minnesota politics to the U.S. Senate and the vice presidency, serving under Jimmy Carter from 1977 to 1981.

In a statement Monday night, Carter said he considered Mondale “the best vice president in our country’s history.” He added: “Fritz Mondale provided us all with a model for public service and private behavior.”

President Joe Biden said of Mondale: “There have been few senators, before or since, who commanded such universal respect. ... It was Walter Mondale who defined the vice presidency as a full partnership, and helped provide a model for my service.”

Mondale’s own try for the White House, in 1984, came at the zenith of Ronald Reagan’s popularity. His selection of Rep. Geraldine Ferraro of New York as his running mate made him the first major-party presidential nominee to put a woman on the ticket, but his declaration that he would raise taxes helped define the race.

On Election Day, he carried only his home state and the District of Columbia. The electoral vote was 525-13 for Reagan — the biggest landslide in the Electoral College since Franklin Roosevelt defeated Alf Landon in 1936. (Sen. George McGovern got 17 electoral votes in his 1972 defeat, winning Massachusetts and Washington, D.C.)

“I did my best,” Mondale said the day after the election, and blamed no one but himself.

“I think you know I’ve never really warmed up to television,” he said. “In fairness to television, it never really warmed up to me.”

Years later, Mondale said his campaign message had proven to be the right one.

“History has vindicated me that we would have to raise taxes,” he said. “It was very unpopular, but it was undeniably correct.”

In 2002, state and national Democrats looked to Mondale when Sen. Paul Wellstone, D-Minn., was killed in a plane crash less than two weeks before Election Day. Mondale agreed to stand in for Wellstone, and early polls showed him with a lead over the Republican candidate, Norm Coleman.

But the 53-year-old Coleman, emphasizing his youth and vigor, out-hustled the then-74-year-old Mondale in

an intense six-day campaign. Mondale was also hurt by a partisan memorial service for Wellstone, in which thousands of Democrats booed Republican politicians in attendance. One speaker pleaded: "We are begging you to help us win this election for Paul Wellstone."

Polls showed the service put off independents and cost Mondale votes. Coleman won by 3 percentage points. "The eulogizers were the ones hurt the most," Mondale said after the election. "It doesn't justify it, but we all make mistakes. Can't we now find it in our hearts to forgive them and go on?"

It was a particularly bitter defeat for Mondale, who even after his loss to Reagan had taken solace in his perfect record in Minnesota.

"One of the things I'm most proud of," he said in 1987, "is that not once in my public career did I ever lose an election in Minnesota."

Years after the 2002 defeat, Mondale returned to the Senate to stand beside Democrat Al Franken in 2009 when he was sworn in to replace Coleman after a drawn-out recount and court battle.

Mondale started his career in Washington in 1964, when he was appointed to the Senate to replace Humphrey, who had resigned to become vice president. Mondale was elected to a full six-year term with about 54% of the vote in 1966, although Democrats lost the governorship and suffered other election setbacks. In 1972, Mondale won another Senate term with nearly 57% of the vote.

His Senate career was marked by advocacy of social issues such as education, housing, migrant workers and child nutrition. Like Humphrey, he was an outspoken supporter of civil rights.

Mondale tested the waters for a presidential bid in 1974 but ultimately decided against it. "Basically I found I did not have the overwhelming desire to be president, which is essential for the kind of campaign that is required," he said in November 1974.

In 1976, Carter chose Mondale as No. 2 on his ticket and went on to unseat Gerald Ford.

As vice president, Mondale had a close relationship with Carter. He was the first vice president to occupy an office in the White House, rather than in a building across the street. Mondale traveled extensively on Carter's behalf, and advised him on domestic and foreign affairs.

While he lacked Humphrey's charisma, Mondale had a droll sense of humor.

When he dropped out of the 1976 presidential sweepstakes, he said, "I don't want to spend the next two years in Holiday Inns."

Reminded of that shortly before he was picked as Carter's running mate, Mondale said, "I've checked and found that they're all redecorated, and they're marvelous places to stay."

Mondale never backed away from his liberal principles.

"I think that the country more than ever needs progressive values," Mondale said in 1989.

That year, Democrats tried to persuade him to challenge Minnesota GOP Sen. Rudy Boschwitz, but he decided against making the race, saying it was time to make way for a new generation.

"One of the requirements of a healthy party is that it renews itself," he said at the time. "You can't keep running Walter Mondale for everything."

That paved the way for Wellstone to win the Democratic nomination, and go on to upset Boschwitz. Wellstone had been preparing to take on Mondale in a primary but would have been a heavy underdog.

The son of a Methodist minister and a music teacher, Walter Frederick Mondale was born Jan. 5, 1928, in tiny Ceylon, Minnesota, and grew up in several small southern Minnesota towns.

He was only 20 when he served as a congressional district manager for Humphrey's successful Senate campaign in 1948. His education, interrupted by a two-year stint in the Army, culminated with a law degree from the University of Minnesota in 1956.

Mondale began a law practice in Minneapolis and ran the successful 1958 gubernatorial campaign of Democrat Orville Freeman, who appointed Mondale state attorney general in 1960. Mondale was elected attorney general in the fall of 1960 and was reelected in 1962.

As attorney general, Mondale moved quickly into civil rights, antitrust and consumer protection cases. He was the first Minnesota attorney general to make consumer protection a campaign issue.

After his White House years, Mondale served from 1993-96 as President Bill Clinton's ambassador to Japan, fighting for U.S. access to markets ranging from cars to cellular phones.

He helped avert a trade war in June 1995 over autos and auto parts, persuading Japanese officials to give American automakers more access to Japanese dealers and pushing Japanese carmakers to buy U.S. parts. Mondale kept his ties to the Clintons. In 2008, he endorsed Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton for president, switching his allegiance only after Barack Obama sealed the nomination.

When Democrats came to him after Wellstone's death, Mondale was working at the Minneapolis law firm of Dorsey & Whitney and serving on corporate and nonprofit boards. He returned to the firm after the brief campaign.

Mondale and his wife, Joan Adams Mondale, were married in 1955. During his vice presidency, she pushed for more government support of the arts and gained the nickname "Joan of Art." She had minored in art in college and worked at museums in Boston and Minneapolis.

The couple had two sons, Ted and William, and a daughter, Eleanor. Ted Mondale served six years in the Minnesota Senate and made an unsuccessful bid for the Democratic nomination for governor in 1998. William Mondale served for a time as an assistant attorney general. Eleanor Mondale, who became a broadcast journalist and TV host, died of brain cancer in 2011.

Joan Mondale died in 2014 at age 83 after an extended illness.

Former Associated Press writer Brian Bakst contributed to this report.