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PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Date: June 9, 2023
Re: Arthur Lane Yeary
Convicted killer denied parole

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Modesto, California - Stanislaus County District Attorney Jeff Laugero announced today that Arthur Lane Yeary, age 64, of Modesto was found unsuitable for parole during a May 19, 2023 hearing of the State Board of Parole Hearings conducted at San Quentin Prison. Deputy District Attorney Margot Roen appeared at the hearing representing the People.

On August 26, 1997, Arthur Yeary was sentenced to 25 years to life in state prison for the murder of his 69-year-old great aunt, Joy Bell Goad. Yeary murdered Goad inside her home on Dallas Street by repeatedly striking her in the head with a hammer after he became angry upon learning that she intended to tell him he could no longer live on her property. After savagely beating Goad, who was nearly blind and deaf, Yeary placed her in a blanket and buried her in her own backyard, spreading trash and debris to conceal the scene. Goad's son reported her missing on December 2, 1990, and a subsequent search of the home by sheriff's detectives revealed a crime scene that had been cleaned up but no sign of the victim.

Goad had allowed the homeless and perpetually unemployed Yeary to live in a camper shell in her backyard. Testimony at trial indicated that Yeary was living off the elderly woman who was subsisting on a small, fixed income, yet he refused to get a job or even apply for food stamps. A friend of Goad's testified that, just before she was murdered, Goad intended to tell Yeary that he could no longer live on her property. After the murder, Yeary brazenly continued to live in the camper shell for almost a year and did not flee until family members began clearing out the trash-strewn backyard. While digging in the backyard, the victim's grandnephew found a shoe and Goad's purse, along with her wallet. Upon further excavation by law enforcement, Goad's body was recovered from a shallow grave and a warrant was issued for Yeary's arrest. Yeary remained on the run until he was arrested in Mississippi in 1996 after the television show "America's Most Wanted" profiled the case in the hope that someone would turn him in to authorities.

At the May 19th hearing before the Parole Board, Deputy District Attorney Roen argued against Yeary's release on parole, citing as disturbing his complete lack of insight into the obvious connection between his drug use and the murder. Although Yeary repeatedly blamed a several-day methamphetamine binge as the reason for the murder, Roen pointed out that since going to prison, Yeary had yet to participate in a proper substance abuse treatment program, something the

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Board had emphasized at prior parole hearings as crucial if he had any hope of being released in the future. In addition, Yeary had recently received a rules violation for using drugs while in prison and could not explain his behavior to the Board, putting blame on his cellmate whom he claimed had provided him with the drugs. Deputy District Attorney Roen also highlighted the fact that both forensic psychologists who interviewed Yeary found that his continued drug use would likely lead to an increase in violence. Roen maintained that, due to these factors, Yeary still represented an unreasonable risk of danger to society and should not be granted parole.

After deliberating, the Board denied parole for a period of three years, admonishing Yeary to heed past warnings to address his substance abuse problem. The Board cited Yeary's lack of self-control and his criminal behavior while incarcerated as aggravating factors weighing against release. The Board also found that Yeary's lack of insight into what caused him to brutally murder Goad and his repeated blame shifting to others and to his drug problem was of significant concern. Finally, alluding to Roen's closing statement, during which she pointed out that Yeary had tried to distinguish himself from other inmates by claiming he was not evil or a criminal like them, Commissioner Muniz told Yeary, "You are exactly where society thinks you should be."

This was Yeary's third parole hearing. At his first hearing in 2013, Yeary stipulated that he was unsuitable for parole. At his second hearing in 2016, Yeary was denied parole for a period of seven years. His next hearing will be scheduled in three years although he may request a date in advance if he can show a change in circumstances to the Board.

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