

Florida man yells as he's executed

STARKE, Fla. (AP) — A Florida inmate convicted of raping and killing a college student decades ago screamed and yelled "murderers!" three times, thrashing on a gurney as he was being put to death Thursday.

The governor's office said Eric Scott Branch, 47, was pronounced dead at 7:05 p.m. Thursday after receiving a lethal injection at Florida State Prison. Branch was convicted of the 1993 rape and fatal beating of University of West Florida student

Susan Morris, 21, whose naked body was found buried in a shallow grave near a nature trail.

Just as officials were administering the lethal drugs that included a powerful sedative, Branch let out a loud, blood-curdling scream, thrashed about on his gurney and then yelled "murderers! murderers! murderers" before falling silent with a guttural groan.

Moments earlier, he had addressed the corrections officers in the room with him by saying that,

instead of them carrying out the death sentence, it should have been Gov. Rick Scott and Attorney General Pam Bondi, both Republicans.

"Let them come down here and do it. I've learned that you're good people and this is not what you should be doing," Branch told the officers.

After Thursday's execution, the Morris family issued a statement saying they are still mourning the victim's death a quarter century ago.

CHAMBER

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"I'm usually not the one in the limelight, so this is kind of unusual for me," he said. "I'm at a loss for words, but I'd really like to thank the Chamber for this honor. Now I'll have to come up with a speech, which is going to be a huge adjustment because normally I like to just kind of stay in the background."

Masching, meanwhile, was surprised at his business at around 3:45 p.m. After he walked into the building, the Chamber members, crowded in the business' lobby, surprised him.

The Business Person of 2017 was described in his own nomination petition as someone who "cares for this community. It is reflected in his company. He does not say 'no' when help is needed. His company is successful as well as charitable, which displays a respect that this community has for Mark and his company."

Afterward, the Kelly Electric president said that he had been involved



Chamber of Commerce Member Specialist Deb Howard fetes Tim Kelly as the 2017 Agribusiness Person of the Year at Elliott's Corner Junction Thursday at noon. JOY BUTLER/DAILY LEADER

with the business since April of 1983, and that he was "totally caught him off guard" but that he "really appreciated" the sentiment.

"I want that to thank my Uncle Leo (Kelly), he's the one who got me started," Masching said. "I'd also like

to thank my partners, Tom Scharer and Joe Kelly, my son, Brian, who works with us and my wife (County Clerk Kristy Masching)."

The banquet honoring the winners will be held March 8 at the Elks Club Lodge starting at 5 p.m.

FUNDING

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to the school.

Coral Springs Police Chief Tony Pustizzi said during a Thursday news conference that the footage being reviewed was 20 minutes old, so the responding officers were hearing that the shooter was in a certain place while officers already in that location were saying that wasn't the case.

"There was nothing wrong with their equipment. Their equipment works," Pustizzi said. "It's just that when the person was reviewing the tape from 20 minutes earlier, somehow that wasn't communicated to the officers that it was a 20-minute delay."

Pustizzi said the confusion didn't put anyone in danger.

Shooting suspect Nikolas Cruz, 19, has been jailed on 17 counts of murder and has admitted the attack. He owned a collection of weapons. Defense attorneys, state records and people who knew him indicate that he displayed behavioral troubles for years.

Broward County incident reports show that unidentified callers contacted authorities with concerns about Cruz in February 2016 and November 2017. The first caller said they had third-hand information that Cruz planned to shoot up the school. The information was forwarded to the Stoneman Douglas resource officer. The second caller said Cruz was collecting guns and knives and believed "he could be a school shooter in the making."

Also in November 2017, Cruz was involved in a fight with the adult son of a woman he was staying with shortly after his mother died, according to a Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office report. On Nov. 28, a 22-year-old man at the Lake Worth home told the responding deputy the he tried to calm down Cruz, who had been punching holes in walls and breaking objects, but Cruz hit him in the jaw, and the man hit Cruz back.

The deputy found Cruz a short time later at a nearby park. Cruz told the

deputy he had been angry because he misplaced a photo of his recently deceased mother, and he apologized for losing his temper.

The other man told the deputy he didn't want Cruz arrested. He just wanted Cruz to calm down before coming home.

Politicians under pressure to tighten gun laws in response to the mass shooting floated various plans Thursday, but most fell short of reforms demanded by student activists who converged Wednesday on Florida's Capitol.

Florida House Speaker Richard Corcoran said Thursday night that his chamber is going to recommend creating a special commission to investigate the "abject breakdown at all levels" that led to the shooting deaths.

The Republican said

the commission, likely led by a parent of one of the slain children, would have subpoena power.

Corcoran also said the news about the resource officer's failure to respond did not dissuade him from moving ahead with what he was calling the "marshal" plan to let local law-enforcement officials train and deputize someone at the school who would be authorized to carry a gun.

"He's not indicative of the law enforcement community; that's not going to change our behavior at all," Corcoran said.

State Sen. Bill Galvano, who is helping craft a bill in response to the shooting deaths, insisted the idea is not the same as arming teachers. He said the program would be optional and the deputized person would have to be trained by local law-enforcement agencies.

U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio

of Florida said a visit to Stoneman Douglas prompted him to change his stance on large capacity magazines. The Republican insisted he is willing to rethink his past opposition on gun proposals if there is information the policies would prevent mass shootings.

"If we are going to infringe on the Second Amendment, it has to be a policy that will work," Rubio said in an interview Thursday with AP.

3-ON-3

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ily that has children at both District 429 and St Mary's and many relationships throughout the community.

"This year, donations will come from the concession stand, baked good sale, possibly some silent auction items and admission."

With officiating from players on the Pontiac Township High School boys' basketball team, each game is 15 minutes long. The clock stops at 10 minutes, 5 minutes and 1 minute for substitutions. Each timeout will last 30 seconds and no other timeouts can be called. Only three players are allowed on the court at a time with a max of four players per team.

Baskets from inside the 3-point arc count for one point and baskets made from outside the arc count for two points. If the game ends in a tie, the winner will be decided by a free throw shootout with each team choosing one player to shoot. The shootout will continue until one player makes a shot and the other misses.

"I think what people appreciate about 3-on-3 basketball is the action," Donovan said. "Once the

game starts, it's all-out action for 15 minutes and everybody on the team is more involved because there are fewer support players on the court."

The tournament is double elimination with a consolation and a winner's bracket. Last year in the boys' division, Prairie Central won the sixth grade tournament, a team from Gibson City won the eighth grade tournament and a team from Hope-dale won for seventh grade.

"For those who can't attend, the games in the junior high gym will be live streamed," Donovan said. "I think that will give people a good idea of what is going on. We are asking people to come out, play some ball and support a great young man."

The cost for a team to participate is \$40 per team with separate divisions for fifth, sixth, seventh and eighth grade boys' and girls' teams. T-shirt order forms and the entry fee must be submitted by March 6. Forms can be dropped off at Bank of Pontiac-Main Branch, 300 W. Washington St., Pontiac. Questions can be directed to Donovan at 815-579-8960 or emailed to mdonovan@bankofpontiac.com.

SLUR

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use that word," Harold said. "He used it again and repeated it three or four times."

In a statement, Minor noted many Republican voters aren't comfortable discussing issues of race and sexual orientation.

"My discussion with Erika was an attempt to point out this unfortunate reality, it was in no way meant to be offensive," he

said. "I honestly left our meeting unaware that our conversation might have made Erika uncomfortable. My apologies to Erika if she was in any way offended."

Breen is contacting party members asking them to withdraw support for Minor in the GOP primary because of the comments Breen calls "outrageous." Breen, who represents the 48th District, said he met with Minor to discuss the situation.

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Symbicort 160mcg/4.5mcg	360 ds	\$210.00	QVAR 80 mcg	400 ds	\$198.00
Entocort 3mg	100	\$125.00	Breo Ellipta 100mcg/25mcg	90 ds	\$395.00
Januvia 100mg	84	\$255.00	Flovent HFA 110mcg	360 ds	\$155.00
Aggrenox 200mg/25mg	200	\$135.00	Onglyza 5mg	84	\$305.00
Abilify 5mg	84	\$135.00	Tricor 145mg	90	\$130.00
Colcrys 0.6mg	100	\$104.00	Pradaxa 150mg	180	\$475.00
Ventolin 90mcg	600 ds	\$75.00	Synthroid 100mcg	90	\$55.00
Propecia 1mg	90	\$65.00	Finacea Gel 15%	90	\$140.00
Vytorin 10mg/40mg	90	\$150.00	Estring 7.5mcg/24hr	1	\$115.00
Xifaxan 550mg	100	\$165.00	Daliresp 500mcg	90	\$295.00
Nexium 40mg	84	\$125.00	Invokana 100mg	90	\$375.00
Asacol 800mg	300	\$245.00	Jublia 10%	24 ml	\$485.00
Vesicare 5mg	100	\$140.00	Tradjenta 5mg	90	\$345.00
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