

# ADER

and East Central Arkansas

Wednesday, June 11, 1997

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## Grandparents: Show mercy for Heath

The grandparents of Heath Stocks released the following statement Friday:

"Joe, Barbara and Heather Stocks are gone and no one can replace them. Despite the fact that their deaths came at the hands of their son and brother, Heath Stocks, our families are convinced that if they had been alive today, they would have asked for mercy from the court.

Despite intense public pressure, Prosecuting Attorney Cook honored the unanimous wishes of our families when he allowed this plea bargain. Mr. Cook heard our pleas and responded as we requested. We are

sincerely thankful for his decision.

As we have struggled with the events of the past few months, it has become clear that our loved ones were not just loved by us, but by people from across the state.

While many may not understand our request for anything other than the death penalty, our decision was based on our own moral convictions and what we believe would be the wishes of Joe, Barbara and Heather. Heath is our only link to this family.

His remorse is genuine, but only God can grant him forgiveness. We can only pray that the Heath we knew

and loved will conquer this demon that committed this crime, and will be able to make a positive difference in someone else's life.

To friends and classmates who held each other tight, to parents who listened more to their children, and to children who began to appreciate their families more because of the events of Jan. 17, we pray that you will not wait for another tragedy to show your love for each other."

The families of Elwood and Annie Mae Harris and Martin and Dorothy Stocks