

Jury Awards \$390,000 to estate of boy shot outside Tacoma Party

After a nearly two-week trial, a Pierce County jury Friday awarded \$390,000 in damages to the estate of a teenager gunned down at an after-hours party in Tacoma's Nalley Valley in 2011.

The estate of Billy Ray Shirley III, 17, sued Bill's Towing and Garage and Kollected Souls Security last year. The lawsuit contended Bill's Towing improperly allowed a property it owned to be used as an illegal nightclub and that Kollected Souls did not provide adequate security at events held at the club.

A motorcycle club called the Global Grinders threw at least two parties at the warehouse that resulted in deadly shootings.

Lawyers for Shirley's estate, Ashton Dennis and Lincoln Beauregard, contend in court documents that Bill's Towing was responsible for Shirley's death because it knew of the illegal nightclub but did nothing to stop it and "instead simply collected profits" from renting out the space.

"The jury was clear in their decision. As a landlord, you do not simply get to stay ignorant to the activity on your property," Beauregard said after Friday's verdict was announced.

Shirley was killed Aug. 27, 2011 after he and some friends went to a party at the club to offer someone a ride home. They stayed at the party for a while when it turned out their help wasn't needed.

At some point, a fight broke out and Shirley was shot in the back as he tried to leave.

No one has been charged in his death.

Lawyers for Bill's Towing argued their client was not responsible for the actions of the people who rented the property from them, had warned them previously to stop throwing parties there and immediately cancelled their lease upon learning of Shirley's death.

They also argued that Shirley was a trespasser on the premises the day he died therefore was partially to blame for what happened.

Shirley's mother, Shalisa Hayes, is working to open a community center in her son's name.

Article by Adam Lynn, The Tacoma News Tribune