

## Idaho death row inmate dies after long illness

By REBECCA BOONE, Associated Press

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — An Idaho death row inmate has died after a chronic illness.

Prison officials say 49-year-old Darrell Edward Payne recently decided to refuse medical treatment, but they did not disclose the nature of his illness.

Fourth District Judge Thomas Neville described Payne as a "cold-blooded, pitiless slayer" when he condemned Payne to death in 2002.

Payne was convicted of the abduction, robbery, rape and murder of 22-year-old Samantha Maher. A Boise State University student who had been married just a year, Maher was on her way to class when Payne approached her vehicle in Julia Davis Park on July 6, 2000. According to court records, Payne forced Maher into the passenger seat and then drove her to an unknown location where he sexually assaulted her before shooting her in the back of the head.

Payne then dumped Maher's body in a drainage tank on land he rented in Nampa that was once used as a dairy farm.

He fled to Eugene, Oregon, and called his wife on July 8, telling her he had killed a woman and was feeling suicidal. His wife contacted authorities, and Eugene police arrested Payne later that day at a motel.

Detectives found letters in his motel room in which Payne referenced killing Maher and committing at least three other rapes. He was later convicted of raping three women in the days before he abducted Maher — a Boise woman in her apartment and two 14-year-old girls on the Boise greenbelt.

Payne's death sentence was temporarily overturned when a federal court said he was entitled to a new sentencing hearing in the wake of a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that juries, not judges, must decide whether a defendant should be sentenced to death. The outcome of his 2010 resentencing hearing was the same, with a jury deciding that he should be executed.

Idaho Department of Correction spokesman Jeff Ray says Payne was pronounced dead early Thursday morning.

The death means there are now just 10 people on Idaho's death row, nine men and one woman.