

Bristol County District Attorney's Office
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District Attorney

Press Release
May 11, 2016

As all of you are aware, Taunton was struck by horrific acts of violence last night. Three people are dead, and five others were injured, some very seriously. My office, in conjunction with Massachusetts State Police and Taunton Police, are in the process of interviewing scores of witnesses and the surviving victims.

As with any incident of this scale that also involved a law enforcement shooting, my office will in the coming weeks release a full report on all the facts and circumstances of this tragic incident. Until that point, I hope you will all understand that we are limited in what we can discuss prior to the completion of an extensive and thorough investigation.

At this time, I will discuss the status of our investigation and identify the victims.

At shortly after 6 p.m., Arthur Justin DaRosa, 28, a life-long Taunton resident, was attending his child's soccer practice at a field on Myricks Street in Taunton. At some point while he was there, he left the field, got into a 2010 Honda Accord owned by the mother of his child and began driving along Myricks Street.

While driving, DaRosa struck a parked 2000 Ford Ranger pickup truck and then exited his vehicle. DaRosa then began attempting to enter various homes along Myricks Street.

At around 6:30 DaRosa eventually gained entry to a home at 270 Myricks Street, where Patricia and Kathleen Slavin were having dinner. It is unclear at this time, how DaRosa gained entry to the home.

Once inside the home, DaRosa stabbed both women and then ran from the residence. Both women were transported to Morton Hospital in Taunton, where Patricia Slavin was pronounced dead at 7:52 p.m. Kathleen Slavin was med-flighted to Brigham and Womens Hospital in Boston, where she remains in serious condition.

DaRosa, according to witness statements, attempted to assault and steal the vehicles of multiple individuals who were driving or stopped along Myricks Streets.

After failing to gain access to any of the vehicles, DaRosa returned to the Honda Accord and sped off towards the Silver City Galleria Mall.

At approximately 6:40 p.m., DaRosa crashed into the front door of the Macy's department store at the mall. DaRosa exited his vehicle, ran into Macy's and physically assaulted at least three women inside the store. The women all sustained non-life-threatening injuries during the assaults. Two have been released from the hospital.

DaRosa then exited the mall briefly before re-entering near Bertucci's Italian Restaurant. Once inside the restaurant, DaRosa armed himself with a knife from the restaurant and attacked a waitress, later identified as Ms. Sheenah Savoy.

Ms. Savoy was stabbed multiple times. During the stabbing of Ms. Savoy, George Heath intervened in an attempt to stop the assault. Mr. Heath was then stabbed in the head and mortally wounded.

At this time, off duty Plymouth County Sheriff's Deputy James Creed, who was having dinner at Bertucci's with his wife, displayed his badge, identified himself as a law enforcement officer and gave multiple commands for DaRosa to drop the knife. When DaRosa refused to comply, Deputy Creed shot him once in the abdomen.

DaRosa was rushed to Charlton Memorial Hospital in Fall River where he was pronounced dead around 8 pm. Mr. Heath was transported to Morton Hospital, where he was pronounced dead at 8:07 p.n. Ms. Savoy was med-flighted to Rhode Island Hospital, where she remains in serious condition.

We have learned from family members that DaRosa checked himself into Morton Hospital Monday night and was released early Tuesday morning. His sister has indicated that he was acting in a disturbed manner and making irrational statements earlier on Monday, and she suggested to him that he needed to seek help. We are in the process of following up on that information as part of the investigation.

The only bright spot in this terrible incident is the conduct of two individuals in Bertucci's.

I would like to comment on the actions of Mr. Heath. He was eating dinner with his wife, as any of us could have been doing. He saw the waitress being stabbed and without concern for his own safety, he intervened and quite possibly saved her life, and the lives of others including his own wife. This shows extraordinary character and courage that tragically cost him his life. Coincidentally, a good friend of my wife's was friends with Mr. Heath, and she indicated she was not surprised by his actions because that's the type of man he was. His actions of heroism should not be forgotten.

I would also like to commend the conduct of Deputy Plymouth County Sheriff James Creed. He also was having dinner when confronted by this extraordinarily violent and dangerous situation. He reacted in a professional, but heroic manner by taking the only course of conduct that was available to him at the time. He prevented further carnage from occurring by his actions.

My thoughts and prayers go out to all people impacted by this horrendous event, especially the family members of the deceased and injured, along with members of the community.

Victims:

-Patricia Slavin, 80, of Taunton, was stabbed inside her home at 270 Myricks Street. She was transported to Morton Hospital and pronounced dead at 7:52 p.m.

-George Heath, 56, of Taunton, was stabbed at Bertucci's Italian Restaurant, transported to Morton Hospital and pronounced dead at 8:07 p.m. Mr. Heath was a visual design teacher at the Greater New Bedford Regional Vocational Technical High School.

-Kathleen Slavin, 48, of Taunton, was stabbed at her home at 270 Myricks Street and transported to Morton Hospital before being taken to Brigham and Womens Hospital. She is currently in stable condition at the intensive care unit.

-Sheenah Savoy, 26, of Taunton, was stabbed at Bertucci's Italian Restaurant. She was med-flighted

to Rhode Island Hospital. She is in serious condition.

-Wendy Ann Oliveira, 45, of Berkley, was assaulted inside Macy's and was transported to Morton Hospital. She has since been released from the hospital.

-Laura Miola, 65, of Taunton, was assaulted inside Macy's and was transported to Morton Hospital and then was transferred to Brigham and Women's Hospital. She is expected to recover from the assault.

-Jucelia Gleason, 38, of Taunton, was assaulted inside Macy's and was transported to Morton Hospital. She has since been released from the hospital.