

**COUNTY OF SUFFOLK
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE**



**THOMAS J. SPOTA
DISTRICT ATTORNEY**

June 29, 2011

DA Spota recounts pharmacy robbery murders

A Medford man pleaded not guilty today to a nine count indictment charging him with the murders of four people inside the Haven Pharmacy on June 19.

David Laffer, 33, is charged with five counts of murder in the first degree; one count for each of the four victims and one murder first degree count for multiple victims. Each charge is a class "A" felony punishable by a sentence of life in prison without parole. According to the indictment he is also charged with the armed violent felony of criminal use of a firearm first degree, a class "B" felony punishable by 25 years in prison.

District Attorney Thomas Spota said Laffer entered the store "carrying a black backpack secreting a loaded .45 handgun" wearing a hat and sunglasses "with mascara filling in a scruffy beard" as he walked directly to the pharmacy counter where both pharmacy employees, Raymond Ferguson Jr. and his pharmacy assistant, 17 year old Jennifer Mejia, were working. Spota said Laffer placed "his backpack on the counter with his right hand inside", engaging Mr. Ferguson first before interrupting himself to ask Jennifer if he could speak to the pharmacist in private.

"During the conversation it is apparent that Laffer has his hand on the gun," Spota said, "lifting up the backpack as he prepares to fire" shooting Mr. Ferguson in the abdomen, "without a demand for drugs or money".

The defendant then lifted up a moveable portion of the countertop and headed directly into the Ms. Mejia's location, where seconds later a scream is heard as Laffer "shoots her twice, killing her". When the defendant returned into the camera's view, "he looked at Mr. Ferguson and shoots him twice more at point blank range".

District Attorney Spota recounted the murders of 71 year old Bryon Sheffield and 33 year old Jaime Taccetta as both customers entered the premises interrupting the robbery as Laffer, behind the pharmacy counter, stuffed containers of pills into his knapsack. Laffer "ambushed" both victims, DA Spota said, shooting each one in the back of the head as they entered the store.

District Attorney Spota said a pair of Laffer's fingerprints was recovered from a paper sign requesting customers turn off their cellphone, posted on the movable countertop that the defendant repeatedly touched as he moved to and from the rear and front of the store as he looted the shelves behind the countertop and left the area to stalk and murder Mr. Sheffield and Ms. Taccetta.

“He wipes off the top and bottom of the counter top with the sleeve of his sweatshirt”, DA Spota noted, but “never notices the paper bearing his fingerprints that fell to the floor.”

The district attorney expressed his gratitude to the SCPD “especially the Homicide Squad and the Emergency Services section who made sure the apprehension of the killer occurred with no loss of life or injury to any of the nearby residents on Pitchpine Lane”, to “Bridgett Brennan, the Special Narcotics Prosecutor for the City of New York and her staff who provided critical information” to local law enforcement, to “the many alert members of the public who provided valuable information to the police” and to “Chief Trial Prosecutor John Collins and ADA James Chalifoux who will be handling this case” before Justice Hudson.

Laffer Indictment



SCDA COMMUNICATIONS

Robert.Clifford@suffolkcountyny.gov

A criminal charge is an accusation. A defendant is presumed innocent until and unless proven guilty in a court of law.

NORTH COUNTY COMPLEX • VETERANS MEMORIAL HIGHWAY • HAUPPAUGE, NY 11787-4311 • (631) 853-4118