

Datestamp: 11/09/2011

Son kills mother at local nursing home

Shooter turned gun on himself

"There's a note that this was planned out, that this was something that he was going to do. Tell everybody he was sorry but this is the way it had to go. So that's about all we have right now."

Chad Fussell,

Dickson police detective

A man shot and killed his mother, then turned the gun on himself Monday afternoon at a local nursing home.

Dickson Police Detective Chad Fussell explained Gary Hotvedt, 60, of Charlotte, visited his mother Eileen Hotvedt, 86, at Dickson Healthcare on 901 N. Charlotte St. in Dickson.

Gary took his mother for a walk around 3:50 p.m. in the nursing home's courtyard, behind the facility's main entrance just off North Charlotte Street and adjacent to the facility's chapel.

The male then shot his mother in the back with a Colt .38-caliber pistol and turned the gun on himself. Fussell said the subjects were dead on scene.

Fussell explained the shooter appeared to have planned out his actions.

"There's a note that this was planned out, that this was something that he was going to do," said Fussell. "Tell everybody he was sorry, but this is the way it had to go. So that's about all we have right now."

Fussell was not aware of any reported unusual behavior from the shooter prior to the murder-suicide. He added no one saw the incident, but Central Dispatch received numerous calls of shots fired in the area.

A spokesperson with Dickson Healthcare said they're deepest sympathies go out to everyone involved in the tragedy. They've turned the investigation over to the proper authorities, and are fully cooperating with the investigation.

Monday's shooting constitutes the third shooting in Dickson in the last two weeks and the fourth death by

shooting this year.

"Based on the events here, this murder–suicide was not a random event, just like the other shootings we've had," explained Dickson Police Chief Rick Chandler. "They were not random events. They're tied to something."

John Traverso Sr. was shot and killed by intruders Oct. 22 at 136 Robin Hood Road in Dickson, and perpetrator DeAnthony Vaughn was shot during an Oct. 29 home invasion at 802 Sunny Ridge Circle in Dickson.

"It's just the environment that's happened," Chandler said in reference to the October shootings. "I don't think the average citizen should be worried about it, because the other two shootings here recently were not random events.

"This is just one of those situations that's just tragic," he added about Monday's deaths.

Chandler also cautioned citizens to be aware and alert about the mental health of family members. He noted tough economic times, like we're experiencing, can magnify drastic actions by struggling individuals.

"My understanding is this individual got laid off here recently too, anything like that just magnifies events," Chandler said of Monday's shooter.

If you're having suicidal thoughts, a national suicide hotline is available at 1–800–273–8255. You can also call Dickson police at (615) 446–8041, 911 if it's an emergency, and they'll direct you to someone who can help.

Main Street Interventions in downtown Dickson operates a 24/7 crisis line at (615) 740–8329 that is available as well.

Warning signs

The American Association of Suicidology presented the following warning signs for detecting a possible suicide attempt. The warnings signs can be remembered through the acronym "IS PATH WARM?"

A person at risk for suicidal behavior most often will exhibit warning signs:

I: Ideation – threatening to hurt or kill him/herself, or talking of wanting to hurt or kill him/herself; and/or looking for ways to kill him/herself.

S: Substance abuse – increased substance use

P: Purposelessness – no reason for living; no sense of purpose in life

A: Anxiety – anxiety, agitation, unable to sleep or sleeping all the time

T: Trapped – feeling trapped (like there's no way out)

H: Hopelessness

W: Withdrawal from friends, family and society

A: Anger – rage, uncontrolled anger, seeking revenge

R: Recklessness – acting reckless or engaging in risk activities, seemingly without thinking

M: Mood change – dramatic mood changes

For information about suicidal tendencies and warning signs, visit
www.cdc.gov/ViolencePrevention/suicide/index.html.

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