

NEWS RELEASE

R. Andrew Murray
District Attorney

December 13, 2012

Matthew Liewald, 16, pleads guilty to murders of his father, stepmother

CHARLOTTE, N.C. – Matthew Liewald, 16, pled guilty today to two counts of Second Degree Murder in Mecklenburg Superior Court before The Honorable W. Robert Bell, Superior Court Judge. Judge Bell sentenced Liewald to 150-189 months in prison for each offense for a total of 300-378 months in prison.

The defendant murdered his father, Christian Liewald, and stepmother, Cassie Buckaloo Liewald, in the early morning hours of Monday, September 26, 2011. The defendant had been grounded by his father for returning home late from Scarowinds the previous Friday night. When the victims left the home on Sunday night, the defendant packed a bag, then put on a tactical vest and equipped himself with two handguns and a survival knife with an 8-inch blade. He positioned a shotgun on the hallway floor and watched a surveillance camera for his father's return. When the victims returned, the defendant ambushed them as they entered the front door. Christian Liewald was shot four times. Cassie Buckaloo Liewald was shot eight times.

The defendant retrieved keys from the bodies and attempted to steal cars belonging to Christian and Cassie Liewald, but ran when he was unsuccessful. He then called police and admitted to shooting the victims. The defendant confessed to homicide detectives, stating that he wanted to run away and believed that killing his father was the only option. The defendant also stated that he intended to kill his father but "not necessarily Cassie."

Contrary to some contentions, the investigation did not reveal the defendant to be the victim of any significant history of abuse.

State law mandates that upon finding probable cause for the offense of First Degree Murder, the Juvenile Court must transfer the case to Superior Court. The District Attorney's Office extended a plea offer of 300-378 months after extensive contact and consultation with both victims' families, one of which was also the family of the defendant, and after carefully considering and balancing the defendant's circumstances against the egregiousness of the crime.

Note: Almost all guilty pleas entered in criminal administrative court are the result of an agreed upon plea arrangement between the State and the defendant, which is then approved by the sentencing judge. For more information about why most cases must be resolved by plea negotiation instead of jury trial, please visit the "Understanding Criminal Court" section of the DA's website at www.charmeckda.com.

// End //