

Records say Barr hid in house, then struck - Herald-Mail, The (Hagerstown, MD) - November 18, 2004

November 18, 2004 | Herald-Mail, The (Hagerstown, MD) | PEPPER BALLARD

pepperb@herald-mail.com

HAGERSTOWN - Four hours after breaking into his ex-girlfriend's home, Steven Linn Barr moved from his hiding spot, sneaked into the bedroom where Cathy Myers and her boyfriend, William Grant, slept, then opened fire, killing Grant and critically wounding Myers, according to allegations in charging documents filed by the Washington County Sheriff's Department.

Barr, 41, of 808 Hamilton Blvd. in Hagerstown, has been charged in the Monday morning shooting death of Grant, 46, and with wounding Myers, 44, at her 12507 **Kemps Mill** Road home.

He was charged with first- and second-degree **murder**, attempted first- and second-degree **murder**, two counts of first-degree assault, two counts of second-degree assault, reckless endangerment, first-degree burglary, third-degree burglary, fourth-degree burglary, use of a handgun in commission of a felony, carrying a handgun on person and illegal possession of a regulated firearm.

Court documents allege Barr called his ex-wife, Penny Barr, 10 minutes after the 3:20 a.m. shootings while he was running through a cornfield from Myers' Williamsport-area home. He told Penny Barr he had planned the shootings for "several weeks" and had planned to commit suicide after shooting the couple, "but he just started running," documents allege.

Penny Barr told police that Barr said he planned his attack at 8 p.m. Sunday, after seeing Grant's yellow Corvette parked in Myers' driveway, according to allegations in charging documents. After seeing the car, Barr went to his best friend's house, "took his handgun" and went home to wait before returning to Myers' house at 11 p.m., charging documents say.

When he arrived at the house, he broke through a patio door and hid in the garage for about four hours "to make sure they were asleep," according to allegations in court papers.

Then Barr went into the bedroom and shot both Myers and Grant several times in the upper body and head with a .32-caliber handgun, charging documents allege.

Myers' daughters, ages 12 and 17, ran to a neighbor's house to call police, according to charging documents.

When the first deputy arrived at the scene, he found Myers lying on the front yard, covered in blood, but still conscious.

Myers told the deputy, "My boyfriend and I were sleeping in my bedroom when he broke in the

house and shot us. Grant is probably dead, too," court papers say.

Charging documents allege that Myers also told the deputy: "Steven Barr is who shot me and my boyfriend."

Grant, who was the sole proprietor of Affordable Homes Inc. in Falling Waters, W.Va., and the father of two children, was pronounced dead inside the house by emergency services personnel, according to charging documents and Grant's family.

Myers was listed in critical condition Wednesday evening at the University of Maryland Shock Trauma Center.

Barr had two prior convictions for second-degree assault, Washington County Assistant State's Attorney John B. Dunlap said during a bond review hearing in Washington County District Court on Wednesday.

One of those convictions was for an assault on his ex-wife, Penny Barr, in which Barr sat on her chest, asked her if she was afraid to die and put a towel around her neck until she passed out, according to published reports at the time.

Capt. Doug Mullendore said Tuesday that a final peace order requested by Myers was issued against Barr on Oct. 22 by District Judge Ralph H. France II. He said that the conditions of the peace order prohibited Barr from contacting Myers and from going to her home.

Barr was free on bond at the time of the Monday shootings, according to court documents. His bond release carried the same conditions as the peace order, according to court documents.

At the bond review hearing Wednesday, Barr, who appeared via closed circuit television, rarely spoke except to acknowledge what was being said to him. He wore a sleeveless green shirt and occasionally tinkered with his handcuffs.

A group of Barr's family and friends was in the courtroom for the hearing. They tried to cluster in a corner of the room in an attempt to be seen by Barr in his view of the courtroom from the jail camera. Some people in the group waved at the television and at least one held a tissue to her nose, her eyes red.

Frederick County District Judge Janice Rodnick Ambrose, sitting in Washington County, advised Barr that the most serious charge he faces, first-degree **murder**, carries a maximum penalty of death. She added that "there are appropriate circumstances" for that penalty.

Barr, his face red, lowered his head in response.

Ambrose said, "That is the death penalty, sir."

She denied bond.

Barr was being held at the Washington County Detention Center, where a spokesman said

Wednesday that Barr was on suicide watch.

© Copyright 2004 The Herald-Mail. All rights reserved.