



Office of the State's Attorney
Madison County, Illinois
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Haine, Major Case Squad announce charges
against three in murder of woman in Collinsville**

Edwardsville, IL — Madison County State's Attorney Tom Haine announced Monday that three defendants have been charged with first-degree murder in connection with the shooting death of a woman in Collinsville.

The victim, Portia Rowland, was fatally shot by a gunman who approached her outside her residence on the morning of Jan. 21.

"We believe the evidence at trial will show that this was not a random crime but was a calculated and cold-hearted murder-for-hire scheme based on a personal grievance," Haine said.

Sammy J. Shafer Jr., 36, of Caseyville, is charged with First-Degree Murder and Solicitation of Murder. The charges allege that Shafer – or one for whom he is legally accountable – shot the victim, resulting in her death. The charges also allege that Shafer encouraged or requested another defendant to murder the victim.

Gary D. Johnson, 45, of East St. Louis is charged with First-Degree Murder and Possession of a Weapon by a Felon. The charges allege that Johnson shot Portia Rowland on Jan. 21. The charges also allege that he possessed a 9mm handgun after having been convicted of a felony, First-Degree Murder, in a St. Clair County case from 1997.

Marty D. Shaw, 33, of Collinsville is charged with First-Degree Murder. The charge alleges that Shaw – or a person for whom he is legally accountable – shot the victim, resulting in her death.

According to Detention Petitions filed by Haine's office, Johnson was the shooter, and was driven to the victim's home by Shaw. Johnson and Shaw were paid a combined \$10,000 by Shafer, according to the Detention Petitions.

The case was investigated by Collinsville Police Department and Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis, with assistance from several other law enforcement agencies.

"This case represents the very best of what law enforcement can accomplish through collaboration and the use of both cutting-edge technology and old-fashioned detective work. The investigators here

unraveled a complex case with lots of moving parts,” Haine said”. Their commitment to justice and their tireless efforts resulted in these charges.”

The case is assigned to Assistant State’s Attorney Luke Yager of the Violent Crimes Unit at the State’s Attorney’s Office.

“Our prayers are with the family and friends of Portia Rowland. This was a horrific and deliberate act of violence that has left an indelible mark on our community,” Haine said. “Our goal is to send a clear message: those who conspire to commit murder, for any reason, will be caught, and will face severe consequences. We remain steadfast in our mission to protect the people of Madison County and ensure that victims and their loved ones receive the justice they deserve.”

Detention Petitions have been filed for all three defendants. The petitions argue the defendants pose a threat to others and should remain in custody while awaiting trial.

This charge and the statements made herein are based upon probable cause. The defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.