

Man Enters Guilty Plea for Killing Neighbor

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE — The Madison County State's Attorney's Office announced Friday a Collinsville man pleaded guilty today to the shooting death of his 40-year-old male neighbor.

Robert T. Beckman (d.o.b. 5/14/61) pleaded guilty to one count of First Degree Murder, a Class M felony. The defendant was charged on June 18, 2018, for the murder of Daniel R. Lee (d.o.b. 3/5/78) after firing a Browning 12 gauge shotgun striking the victim in the head. After shooting Mr. Lee in the head, the defendant fled from the crime scene.

Through the investigation, it was determined that Beckman knew the victim Daniel R. Lee and that the two had prior contact. Beckman made admissions to police officers that he had a temper and that he killed the victim because he was “pissed.”

First Assistant State’s Attorney Crystal Uhe said, “While nothing can fill the void left behind by the tragic loss of Daniel Lee, this full admission of guilt by the defendant will hopefully give Daniel’s family and friends some amount of solace. I intend to ask for a high sentence in this case so that Robert Beckman will never again be free in our community.”

Madison County State’s Attorney Tom Gibbons acknowledged the vital work of his First Assistant Crystal Uhe, head of the Violent Crimes Unit, whose collaboration with the Collinsville Police Department and Illinois State Police secured the plea and conviction of Beckman.

Beckman’s plea was accepted by Circuit Judge Richard Tognarelli. The defendant can be sentenced to 20-45 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

Uhe is seeking a sentence of 45 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. Truth in Sentencing laws mandate that any sentence given on the charge of First Degree Murder will be served at 100 percent.