

Man Pleads Guilty To Murder Of Friend

by Brian Brueggemann

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EDWARDSVILLE - Madison County State's Attorney Tom Haine announced Thursday that a 41-year-old St. Louis man pleaded guilty to first-degree murder and received a 34-year prison term for the fatal shooting of a friend in Maryville. Danyiel M. Johnson pleaded guilty Thursday to killing Ronald L. Holland, 41, also of St. Louis, on March 17.



Holland's body was discovered that afternoon behind a garage on North Bluff Road. Johnson is required to serve 100 percent of the prison sentence.

"This defendant gunned down a supposed friend and left him to die behind a garage," Haine said. "Thankfully, this sentence ensures that he'll be an elderly man before he's even eligible for release from prison."

The investigation showed that Johnson and Holland drove together to Illinois to pick up a vehicle. They became lost, and as they were driving, they happened to see two different police units on routine patrol. Johnson began to suspect that he was being “set up” by Holland.

They stopped at the garage, got out of the vehicle, and started arguing. Johnson admitted firing multiple shots at Holland. Johnson told investigators he saw Holland fall to the ground, heard Holland moaning, then told Holland that he loved him. Johnson then threw the gun into an adjacent wooded area, got back into the vehicle, and drove back to Missouri.

Within 48 hours, police took Johnson into custody in Missouri.

Haine commended Maryville Police and the Major Case Squad of Greater St. Louis for their work. “Their investigation was swift and thorough, and resulted in the quick identification and apprehension of the perpetrator,” Haine said. He also commended Assistant State’s Attorney Morgan Hudson, whose work resulted in the lengthy prison term.

Maryville Police Chief Rob Carpenter said, “I’m grateful to the Madison County State’s Attorney’s Office, as well as the members of the Major Case Squad, who brought closure to the victim’s family.”