

NH man gets life for 2014 Saco shooting, home invasion

BY JUDY HARRISON
BDN STAFF

PORTLAND — A New Hampshire man was sentenced Tuesday at U.S. District Court to life in prison in connection with a Dec. 18, 2014, home invasion in Saco, according to the U.S. attorney’s office.

Gregory Owens, 59, of Londonderry, New Hampshire, was convicted by a jury in February of interstate domestic violence and discharging a firearm during and in relation to a crime of violence at the end of a two-week trial.

In addition to prison time, Owens was ordered to pay more than \$80,000 in restitution, most of which

would go to the Saco homeowners.

U.S. District Nancy Torresen imposed the sentence recommended by the prosecution, according to court documents.

Defense attorney Sarah Churchill of Portland told local media that she would appeal Owens’ sentence to the 1st U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston.

In addition to the federal charges, Owens was indicted by the York County grand jury on 13 state charges, including aggravated attempted murder and elevated aggravated assault for driving to a Saco home and shooting his ailing wife and the homeowner.

Those charges still are

pending, according to Churchill.

Owens drove from New Hampshire to Maine intending to kill his wife, who was an overnight guest at the home of friends living in Saco, according to a previously published report. During the home invasion, Owens shot his wife and the homeowner with a pistol. Both survived their injuries and testified for the prosecution during Owens’ trial.

Federal prosecutors said Owens feared his mistress in Wisconsin was about to tell his wife of their affair.

Owens faced up to 20 years in prison on the interstate domestic violence charge because the jury found that life-threatening

bodily injury occurred, and no less than 10 years and up to life on the firearm charge, which must be served consecutively, according to the U.S. attorney’s office. He also faced a \$250,000 fine on each count.

Torresen sentenced Owens to 20 years on the stalking charge and to a consecutive life sentence on the gun charge, according to court documents.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic violence and would like to talk with an advocate, call 866-834-4357, TRS 800-787-3224. This free, confidential service is available 24/7 and is accessible from anywhere in Maine.



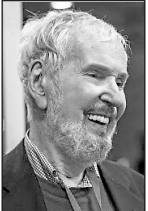
LEXIE O’CONNOR | CBS 13

This Saco home is the scene of the 2014 shooting.

Robert Benton awarded MIFF lifetime award

BY JOEL CRABTREE
SPECIAL TO THE BDN

He’s won three Academy Awards. And this week he received another special award, right here in Maine. Filmmaker Robert Benton received the Maine International Film Festival’s Lifetime Achievement Award, introduced by author and former Waterville resident Richard Russo as “my teacher, my collaborator, my uninvited co-conspirator, my dear friend.”



Benton

The award was presented after a screening of Benton’s 1994 adaptation of Russo’s novel “Nobody’s Fool” Sunday night at the Waterville Opera House.

“The gift of this movie ... is the collaboration between Richard and me,” said Benton, who at 83 is as sharp and witty as they come. “The most wonderful part of this movie is Richard — and the actors. They are spectacular, but Richard gave them a safety net to allow them to do whatever they wanted to do.”

“Nobody’s Fool” stars Paul Newman as the weathered, straight-shooting Sully, who, despite his own flaws, mistakes and misfortunes, remains optimistic and, one might even say, hopeful about life. Though he puts up a somewhat surly front, Sully is not only likable, he is the glue that keeps the residents of Bath, New York, from falling apart. The film, which marks the first time Benton and Russo worked together, brought out the best in both writers, igniting a literary sparring match that ultimately benefited the film, and its audiences. During filming, when Benton

would return to his office after watching the dailies, he’d be greeted by rewrites of his script from Russo.

“I’m very competitive,” Benton noted. “So I would rewrite what Richard did. And the great thing about Richard, is he’s just as competitive as I am, and he would [immediately send] a rewrite back to me. And in four or five days, we had scenes that I believe are far and away the best scenes in the movie.”

About a third of the way through making “Nobody’s Fool,” Benton realized he had a good film on his hands, but even better, he had found a great collaborator.

“Unfortunately for me,” Benton added, “he’s ruthlessly honest.”

Since working on “Nobody’s Fool,” Benton and Russo have come together for several projects, and in Russo’s words, Benton has brought an “infectious, ungaurded enthusiasm that I hadn’t experienced since graduate school.”

“I guess what I’m trying to say is that in middle age, Robert Benton made a young man of me again by offering me a different kind of friendship than I had ever experienced before,” Russo said. “One that I didn’t know I wanted, or needed.”

In addition to “Nobody’s Fool,” MIFF also screened Benton’s films “Bonnie and Clyde,” “Kramer vs. Kramer” and “The Late Show.” The Maine International Film Festival continues throughout the week, with its final night on Sunday, July 17. For more information, visit miff.org.

For information on the Maine International Film Festival, visit www.miff.org. For 140-character reviews of films screening at MIFF and other updates on the festival, follow Joel on Twitter: @JoelCrabtree.

Jefferson motorcyclist remains in critical condition

BY ALEXANDER VIOLO
THE LINCOLN COUNTY NEWS

A Jefferson motorcyclist involved in a collision with a Jeep SUV on Winslow Mills Road (Route 32) on July 5 in Waldoboro remains in critical condition at a Lewiston hospital as of Tuesday.

Communications Director Randall Dustin, of the Central Maine Medical Center, confirmed the condition of the motorcyclist, Mark Blackler, 53.

Blackler sustained injuries to his head and upper body. He was treated at the scene by Waldoboro Emergency Medical Services, transported to the vicinity of the Jefferson Fire Station, and taken by LifeFlight helicopter to Central Maine Medical Center.

The operator and sole

occupant of the jeep, Rodney Orff, 79, of Jefferson, was checked out at the scene by Waldoboro EMS and later taken to the hospital by private vehicle to be checked out for minor injuries.

According to Officer Larry Hesselstine, of the Waldoboro Police Department, Orff was attempting to make a left-hand turn from a driveway into the northbound lane of Winslow Mills Road near Orff’s Corner Community Church when the collision occurred.

He said the motorcyclist, a 2006 Harley-Davidson, hit the driver’s side of the jeep between its front and back doors.

Hesselstine said the speed of the motorcycle may have been a factor contributing to the accident.

Harley-Davidson rally rolls into Bangor

BY NOK-NOI RICKER
BDN STAFF

BANGOR — When organizers of the Maine Harley-Davidson Owners Group rally decided on Bangor for their 2016 event, which starts Wednesday and runs through Sunday, no other events were planned for the area.

Now, there are downtown and waterfront concerts or other events scheduled that will keep the hundreds of motorcyclists entertained when they’re not riding their bikes.

“As it turns out, all the things planned [in the city] work for us — our people like to go to concerts,” rally coordinator Cliff Lippitt said Wednesday as volunteers set up the events area in the parking lot of Cross Insurance Center.

He said organizers were trying to avoid traffic tie-ups for the nearly 500 Harley registrants, and are working with the city to keep things running smoothly.

Bangor-area H.O.G. events are planned at the Cole Land Transportation Museum, Cross Insurance Center, Season’s Restaurant, the Sea Dog Brewing Co. and Central Maine Harley Davidson in Hermon, and there are guided or self-guided rides from these sites to points all over the state. A hefty schedule of events is listed on the group’s rally website. Public events include daily demonstration rides on a wide variety of Harleys from Cross Insurance Center for anyone with a motorcycle license, and on Friday at the waterfront, a Ride and Bike Show is planned for 4-6 p.m., and a Lighted Bike Show will be



NOK-NOI RICKER | BDN

The 2016 Maine Harley Owners Group rally gets underway in Bangor on Wednesday. Audry Williams, a H.O.G. rally volunteer from the Bronx, New York, parks one of the Harleys people can try out at the Cross Insurance Center.

held 8-10 p.m.

“The public is invited to come down and judge the bikes,” Lippitt said of the two shows.

Also listed on the schedule is Thursday’s Cool Sounds Concert Series and market in West Market Square, 5-8 p.m., featuring the dance band Trendy Roots, and Friday night’s free outdoor movie, “The Princess Bride,” at Pickering Square sponsored by River City Cinema.

The Harley Owner’s Group rally for Maine is returning to the Queen City after 18 years.

“We felt it needed to come back to Bangor,” Lippitt said.

“This is a great spot to go wherever you want to go,” he said later. “I really

like the Rangeley route. Scenic is a great ride and a nice close ride is down to Fort Knox.”

So many people signed up for the approximately 280-mile round-trip, police-escorted ride to West Quoddy Head that organizers limited the ride to 100 and had to turn people away, Lippitt said. Each ride typically involves some sort of food destination, the organizer said.

“We like to eat. It’s doesn’t have to be fancy, but it has to be good,” Lippitt said.

Central Maine Harley-Davidson kicks off the four-day event Wednesday with music and food by Texas Roadhouse until 6:30 p.m. at their Route 2 location in Hermon.

The Waterfront concerts include Hall and Oates on Thursday at 7 p.m., with gates opening at 5 p.m., and Tedeschi Trucks and Los Lobos at 7:30 p.m. Friday, with gates opening at 5:30 p.m.

“Our slogan for this year’s rally is ‘Rollin on the River, Hear the Roar,’ and our side slogan is ‘Having more fun than normal,’” Lippitt said, referencing a Bangor Daily News headline from the rally in 1998. “That is really what we want to do. Ride during the day, have fun at night and meet new people.”

With riders coming from 30 different states and four Canadian provinces, he said, “the Maine rally is really a destination.”

Man facing federal charges in overdose death

BY DEBORAH MCDERMOTT
THE YORK WEEKLY

PORTLAND — A Lebanon man was in U.S. District Court last week following his arrest last month on federal charges that he sold fentanyl last March to a York man who subsequently died of an overdose.

Lucas Heindenstrom, 25, waived a probable cause hearing slated to take place before U.S. District Court Justice John Rich on Wednesday, July 6, essentially admitting to Rich in court that the U.S. Attorney’s office has enough evidence to move forward with a case against him.

The victim in the case is not identified by name in court documents, and Assistant U.S. Attorney Jamie Guerrette said he was precluded from speaking about any facts not contained in the documents.

However, the date of the incident, according to the record, was March 31. On that date, police responded to a heroin overdose death of a 29-year-old man at a Cape Neddick residence. Police also declined to name the victim at the time or now.

Heindenstrom was arrested June 13, following an investigation into the man’s death, and is charged with one count of distribution of fentanyl, a Class C felony. The maximum term of imprisonment is up to 20 years, with a fine of up to \$1 million.

According to the affidavit supporting the charge against him, Drug Enforcement Administration Special Agent John Daly said among the items found in the victim’s bedroom was his cellphone, which was taken into evidence.

York police noticed a series of text messages be-

tween the York man and a contact identified as “Lucas H” on March 30 setting up a meeting that night. Heindenstrom provided the man his address in Lebanon, and the man said he was on his way.

“A short while later, the decedent received the following text message from ‘Lucas H’: ‘U will like it for sure it’s a good rush,’” Daly wrote in the affidavit. “After the decedent responded, ‘It taste like sit’ and ‘sugar,’ ‘Lucas H’ replied, ‘It’s not I promise wait till u try it bro its good man I swear I got u and someone else a g and they loved it I know u will like it.’ Within a minute, the decedent also received the following text message from ‘Lucas H’: ‘its gatta be the fet. U taste.’”

Daly said, based on his experience, the “fet” referred to fentanyl and the “g” referred to a gram.

On April 1, DEA investi-

gators posing as the York man texted Heindenstrom asking to meet again. Investigators told him to meet at the Cumberland Farms store in Rochester, New Hampshire. Investigators watched as he left his residence at the same address he’d given the York man and drove to the store. There, he was taken into custody.

Heindenstrom admitted he was meeting the York man to get money to obtain heroin from a third party. He also admitted he met the man three days prior “and admitted that he obtained a gram of what he believed to be heroin for the decedent on (March 30) for \$100.”

The drug taken from the York man’s residence on March 31 later tested positive for fentanyl.

Heindenstrom is scheduled to appear in U.S. District Court July 18 for a bail hearing.

Sanford man accused of trafficking heroin, cocaine

BY JUDY HARRISON
BDN STAFF

WELLS — A Sanford man was arrested Friday and charged with aggravated trafficking in heroin, a Class A crime, according to the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency.

Shane Eisener, 40, is being held without bail at the York County Jail in Al-

fred, according to a news release issued Monday.

Agents seized 42 grams of a heroin/fentanyl mix and 15 grams of cocaine, Maine Department of Public Safety spokesman Stephen McCausland said in the release. The estimated street value of the drugs was \$7,800.

His arrest was the result of a two-month investigation

by the MDEA’s York District Task Force, the release said. Eisener and others allegedly regularly traveled to Massachusetts to purchase large amounts of heroin to be sold in the Sanford area.

Eisener was arrested in a car that was returning from Lawrence, Massachusetts, the release said. The driver of the vehicle was released

pending a review of potential charges by the Maine attorney general’s office at a later date.

The investigation is ongoing and others associated with Eisener have been identified, McCausland said Monday. Additional arrests are expected.

If convicted, Eisener faces up to 30 years in prison and a fine of up to \$50,000.