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Laytonville murders: Victim's names released by MCSO

By Adam Randall, udjar@ukiahdj.com, [@theadamrandall](https://twitter.com/theadamrandall) on Twitter

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The identities of two Laytonville residents fatally stabbed Sunday in rural Mendocino County were released by the Sheriff's Office late Monday afternoon.

Coleman Palmieri, 52, and his son, Teo Palmieri, 17, were allegedly killed at the hands of 19-year-old Talen Clark Barton, MCSO Lt. Shannon Barney stated in the sheriff's updated report.

A total of seven people were in the home at the time of the incident, including Barton, which was located in the 46000 block of Meadow Lane, according to the sheriff's report.

The names of those injured were not released. Barton is scheduled for arraignment Tuesday morning in Mendocino County Superior Court.

The incident began just after midnight Sunday, when Barton allegedly woke up and grabbed a 12-inch knife from the kitchen and proceeded to brutally attack Teo Palmieri in his bedroom. The surviving 54-year-old woman attempted to help the boy when Barton allegedly attacked her as well, Sheriff Tom Allman told media during a Sunday afternoon press conference. The names of the woman has still not been released.

Barton proceeded through the home, allegedly killing Coleman Palmieri, and injuring another 52-year-old man.

Two juvenile girls, who are apparently cousins, one 15 years old and one 14 years old, were also asleep in the home, before being alerted during the commotion. It was previously reported by MCSO Sunday that both girls were 17 years of age.

One of the girls talked Barton out of leaving the scene and called 911 approximately 30 minutes after the events unfolded, or around 12:46 a.m. Monday's sheriff's report stated Barton then took over the phone call and engaged in a lengthy conversation with the dispatcher.

During the phone conversation, Barton admitted to stabbing the four victims at the home, killing two. He also reported to the dispatcher the other two were still alive and required medical attention for their life-threatening wounds, the sheriff's report stated.

"The dispatcher then obtained driving directions and as responding deputies arrived, talked Barton into placing the knife down and exiting the residence where he surrendered without incident," Barney stated.

Deputies were on the scene approximately 25 minutes after the emergency call was placed, Allman said Sunday.

MCSO then conducted a 'protective sweep' of the residence. In the downstairs portion of the home, the two juvenile girls were found, along with the surviving 54-year-old woman and 52-year-old man. Both had severe neck and chest wounds, the sheriff's report stated.

Upstairs in the home, the Sheriff's Office said deputies found the bodies of Coleman and Teo Palmieri with multiple stab wounds to the neck and chest.

First responders from the Laytonville Fire Department and Cal Fire provided medical attention at the scene. The 54-year-old woman and 52-year-old man were flown by helicopter, one to Redding Mercy Hospital, and the other to Santa Rosa Memorial Hospital. The Sheriff's Office said they were siblings.

The surviving 52-year-old man and his daughter, the 15-year-old girl, recently arrived from St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada, and were in town to visit family members and to attend "a local summer camp for youth," according to the sheriff's report.

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The two juvenile girls were placed in protective custody by Child Protective Services, until they could be transferred into the care of other family members, Barney stated.

The MCSO reported Sunday the Canadian authorities were notified of the incident. Monday's report confirmed the same and that the Canadian authorities were working in tandem with the Sheriff's Office and CPS.

The sheriff's report Monday stated Barton was reported to have been in the foster care placement system and had been living with the family on Meadow Lane for over a year.

However, it was unknown at the time of the report if Barton was officially placed with the family by a CPS agency.

Barney stated in his report the family was described by many as having taken Barton in, and trying their best to make a home for him as well as encouraging enrollment at a college in Humboldt County.

Barton admitted to being a heavy marijuana user, and denied using any controlled substances, according to the report. No controlled substances were recovered from the scene, although deputies said he appeared to be high when they reached the home.

Allman recalled one prior incident involving Barton and the Sheriff's Office in January 2013, but wouldn't disclose the details of that incident since Barton was a juvenile at the time.

No motive was given in Monday's update as to why Barton allegedly attacked the victims.

But, Allman noted Sunday the investigation has uncovered that Barton was talking about killing people with a friend as little as two weeks prior to the incident.

Barton faces arraignment at 8:30 a.m. Tuesday morning before Mendocino County Superior Court Judge David Nelson, according to Mike Geniella, Mendocino County District Attorney spokesman.

Geniella said DA David Eyster would realistically be seeking life imprisonment without parole instead of a death sentence, which Geniella said is typical for a young suspect.

Eyster's senior staff was briefed on the progress of the investigation Monday by Mendocino County Sheriff's Office investigators and DA investigators, and is imminently expected to file official charges against Barton in his alleged involvement in the murders, Geniella said.

Sources say Eyster is likely to file a six-count criminal complaint against Barton during Tuesday's arraignment, alleging the killings were done deliberately with premeditation.

The probable charges in Eyster's complaint include two counts of murder, both with special allegations that Barton used the knife to commit the killings, along with alleged multiple murder special circumstances, according to sources.

Also, two counts of attempted murder are being sought by Eyster, including two special allegations of using the knife, and inflicting great bodily injury, according to sources.

There are also two counts of false imprisonment involving the two, unharmed juvenile girls at the scene, and two other special allegations of using the knife involving the false imprisonment, sources say.

For now, Barton remains in custody at the Mendocino County Jail on the arresting charges of double murder and double attempted murder along with false imprisonment, according to jail records. He is being held without bail.

Jennie Mackey, of Laytonville, who knows the family, told The Ukiah Daily Journal that Barton was in good spirits the day leading up to the incident, as well as several days before.

"The family love him," Mackey said. "He was like their own child. They had no issues. In fact he was supposed to stay with a family friend and my son that night, but family came down from out-of-town."

Mackey said she has no idea why he decided to attack the people in the home, but it has been a shock to everyone.

"In the days leading up to this he was happy, was out with friends, and they said he was in a great mood doing better than ever," Mackey said. "He got along with everyone in the family."

The MCSO said the investigation is continuing and anyone with information regarding the crimes is encouraged to call the Sheriff's Office tip line at 463-4111.

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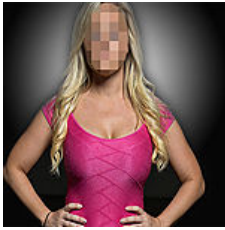
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