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NATHAN DICKSON RECEIVES FOUR CONSECUTIVE LIFE SENTENCES

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(Anderson, SC). Nathan Dickson pled guilty today, September 21, 2009, in Anderson County General Sessions court to four counts of murder and four counts of possession of a weapon during the commission of a violent crime. The State agreed not to seek the death penalty in exchange for his plea. The Honorable Cordell Maddox presided.

The facts were stated as follows:

On Saturday morning, April 26, 2008, law enforcement responded to 153 Pine Lake Drive in Anderson County in reference to a 911 call that had abruptly ended. When the officers arrived they found the bodies of 46 year old Andy Dickson, 14 year old Taylor Dickson, 41 year old Maritza Hurtado Dickson, and 19 year old Jiliam Salazar, all of whom had been fatally shot. The police immediately tried to locate anyone else who had been living in the home. Nadine Salazar, Maritza's eldest daughter, was at flight school at the time in Florida and defendant Nathan Dickson, age 18 at the time, could not be located. When this Defendant was located later the same evening, he gave a full voluntary written confession admitting to shooting and killing his father, brother, stepmother and stepsister. In his confession, the Defendant details the events of that morning. (The excerpts read in court are attached to this press release).

The evidence collected in this case corroborates the Defendant's confession. There is a horrific 911 call from Andy and gruesome crime scene photos that are consistent with what Nathan describes. A 12 gauge shotgun was found in the woods by the house. According to SLED the shotgun was found to be in working order and the three spent shotshells located at the crime scene were determined to have been fired by this shotgun. Andy Dickson's blood was found on the handle of the shotgun. Lt. Scott with Anderson County Sheriff's Office Forensics located a palm print that matched the Defendant's right hand on the same shotgun and found the position of the palm print to be consistent with someone having swung the shotgun like a club. He further analyzed a fingerprint from a spent shotshell collected from the crime scene that was also likely to have been the Defendants. The autopsies also confirm what Nathan describes in his statement. Maritza was shot once in the right side of the head. Andy had multiple gunshot wounds and blunt

force trauma in the head where Nathan described hitting him with the shotgun. Taylor had a shotgun wound to the neck and a shotgun wound to the head. Jiliam also had a shotgun wound to her left side. All bodies were also located where Nathan describes in his statement.

In court today, Solicitor Adams stated the following:

Despite the hard work on the part of the Sheriff's Office, we will never know why Nathan Dickson so tragically and violently took four of his family members' lives. This has been one of the most difficult aspects for everyone associated with this case. There were no drugs or alcohol found in his system. There is no issue of insanity. We can only speculate as to motive. Nathan called his father his hero on his MySpace page and loved his little brother. He got along well with his step-mother and step-sisters. He graduated from Wren High in June of 2007. According to many field interviews, in high school, he had been a good kid, a decent student and well liked. After graduation, he had been living in an apartment with a friend who had recently kicked him out for stealing his credit card. His first love had also recently broken up with him because her mother did not like him and did not want him around. He tried to get into the Marines and scored so low on the military entrance exam that he was not allowed to complete the next part of the test. However, he lied to several people about already being in the marines and having done several tours. When his friend kicked him out of the apartment Nathan went to live with his father, stepmother, stepsister, and brother. This was approximately two weeks before the killings. Shortly before the murders, Nathan had stolen \$600 in change from his father. There was some tension in the house over the Defendant moving back in with the rest of the family. Maritza had confided in coworkers that there was some trouble with "the boy" in the home and that she was planning to move out of the home. However, she never mentioned Nathan by name and the co-workers assumed she was talking about Taylor. Nothing in Nathan Dickson's life at the time of these murders rises to the level of explaining why he woke up that fateful Saturday morning and went on a killing spree with the people he loved.

This has been extremely emotional and difficult for everyone who has been involved in this case and for everyone who has been touched by the Dickson and Hurtado families. This is a horrific tragedy that has affected an entire community. Andy and Maritza had been together for years. Nathan and Taylor essentially grew up with Maritza and her 2 daughters Jiliam and Nadine (the surviving sister). They were a close family and a family that was well respected in the community. Maritza taught ESL in Greenville at Cherrydale Elementary School. Jiliam was at Tri County Tech and wanted to go to vet school at UGA. Andy worked at Vulcan Construction and was very active in his children's lives. Taylor was 14 years old and also went to Wren Middle School. He played baseball and Andy helped coach and was very involved in the school.

We have met with and talked at length with the family – both sides. Both sides are strongly opposed to the Death Penalty. They all loved this Defendant. His extremely young age of 18 at the time of the murders and the fact that he had no prior criminal history also played a big role in reaching the decision to accept this plea and sentence

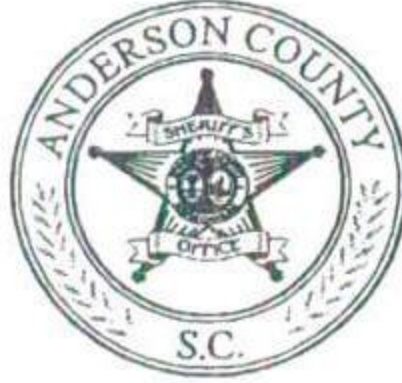
today. Also, not being able to answer “why?” has been extremely disturbing and unsettling for not only the family, but for law enforcement as well.

Nathan is just 20 years old right now. The family believes that this sentence, having to think about what he did for the rest of his life, in essence, is worse than a death sentence. They are probably right.

In Court today the Judge also heard from an expert from the defense team that stated Nathan Dickson was suffering from dissociative amnesia which affected his ability to recall what happened the day of the murders. However, after waiving his client-attorney privilege, his attorneys stated that for up to two weeks after the murders, he clearly admitted to the crimes.

I have struggled with the decision to accept four consecutive life sentences over death. But this tragedy has shocked us all, the family, law enforcement and the entire community. We will never know the extent of the number of lives affected. The Hurtado’s and the Dickson’s are incredible people and incredibly strong families. They will never be able to forget what happened that day. I just pray that they are able in some way to come to peace with what has happened and that they are able to move on with their lives. This guilty plea today can at least give them closure to this chapter in the healing process. They have a long way to go. This plea is what is best for this family and for this community.

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Statement of Nathaniel Casey Dickson

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On 4/26/2008

(Saturday) I came home from Belton where I had been riding 4-Wheelers with my friend Brantley. I got home about 2am and spoke to my dad. He was upset I was so late coming home. I told about the tire problem with the Thunderbird and he said to just take the Explorer to Brantley's in the morning. Everyone was asleep. I slept in my little brother's room (Taylor) at the back of the house. Taylor was already asleep in the futon. It was a fitful night of sleep, off and on you know. I was thinking about the girl I am in love with,

I love her but her mother will not let me around her. She has said she filed Stalking charges on me. I don't know if she did or not. I was also worried about my Thunderbird. I messed it up yesterday over at Brantley's house. I woke up and noticed that my bother and dad were gone. I assumed they had gone to the dump with the trash as my dad does every Saturday morning. I looked for some of my clothes in Taylor's closet and saw Taylor's gun in the corner. I grabbed the 12 gauge. Taylor shoots squirrel with that gun. I grabbed a red OO buck shotgun round from on top of his dresser. I cracked the breach and loaded the round. I walked to the middle bedroom off the hall where Marritza (my stepmom) was in the bed. Jilliam was on the foot of the bed talking to my stepmom. I stood in the doorway and fired the round at her hitting her in the right hand side of her head. She did not move after I shot her. I went back to Taylor's room and reloaded the shotgun and grabbed the last live round on the dresser. Jilliam, my step-sister had run out of Maritza's room screaming. I followed her into the kitchen and fired a single round at her. She was standing in the washer/dryer room when I shot her. My brother Taylor had walked in right before I shot Jilliam and he said "stop-stop". I punched him in his head and must have knocked him out. He just lay there on the floor. I had heard my dad's truck pull up after I shot my step-mom so I knew he was home. I reloaded at some point putting the last round off Taylor's dresser into the shotgun. I made my way out the back door of the house. I made my way around to the pool and saw my dad walking up the embankment on the pool side of the house. I figured he was checking the pool filter out at the outbuilding. I took a shot at him and he fell down but I don't know if I hit him. He got up and started running toward the road. I went back into the house and went into my dad's walk-in closet and got a shotgun shell out of a box. I went out the back door (Taylor was getting up off the floor) Taylor was going out the front door. I peeked out the back door and did not see my dad. I went back to the front door. Taylor was standing about half way down the walkway toward the driveway and he was screaming. I shot Taylor and turned around and walked back inside to get another shell from dad's closet. I walked back out and did not see Taylor. I walked to the corner of the house (pool side) and saw dad at the edge of the yard at the road. I shot one time at him and hit him. My dad fell and started crawling down the hill. He was in the road at this point crawling. I went back inside and got another live shotgun shell from the box in my dad's closet. I walked out my dad's room to see that my brother was laid out on his chest on the chair in the living room. He was looking at me and crying "help, help". I could not stand to hear

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that so I shot him in the head. The blast blew blood and pieces of Taylor onto the walls of the living room. He did not cry any more. I went back to the closet and got another round from the box. I made my way out the front door I saw my dad down in the road on his side. He was on his phone. I walked down to him and stopped a short distance away. He rolled over and told me "I love you" right before I took my last shot at him. He had thrown his hand up and the shot hit him in the hand and arm. I then hit him with the stock of the shotgun. I swung it like club. He was still breathing after that. I tossed the gun into the woods on our side of the road. I felt so sick at that point. I went back into the house and got Maritza's keys to her Explorer off the TV in her room. I then got my sandals out of Taylor's room. (I was barefoot during all of the shooting) I left in the Explorer. I backed out into the road and did not look at my dad when I left even in the rearview mirror. I stopped at the gas station at Hwy 8 and Hwy 86. I went inside and bought (3) bottles of Propel water and a can of dip (Grizzly wintergreen). I then called Brantley from Taylor's cell phone _____, I had been using it for about 2 weeks. I told Brantley I was on my way to his house. We were supposed to ride 4-wheelers in Belton. I took Hwy 8 the Hwy 81 and turned onto Concord Road. I travelled down Main Street and then took a left at the Ingles and Post Office. I went by the hospital and then left and it eventually turns into Belton Anderson Highway.

I stopped at the Hardee's in Belton and got a chicken biscuit. I took two bites but could not eat it. I was sick to my stomach. I used Jilliam's debit card to buy the breakfast at Hardee's. It was in the Explorer. I got to Brantley's and went inside. His girlfriend was there and I sat in the house for a little bit. I went outside and got the 4-wheelers ready to go. I then noticed the spots of blood on my feet. I washed the spots of blood off my feet in Brantley's bathroom. We rode 4-wheelers to Honea Path and down to some dam. We were out there until 7:30 -8pm before we came back to Brantley's house. I kept lagging behind during the day because my heart was not in it. Once we came back to Brantley's, Brantley and I rode up to the Ingles in Belton to get steaks. I drove the Explorer. I threw an old cell phone of Maritza's out the window. I don't know why I did that. The Detective's were at Brantley's when we got back.

I don't know why I killed all of my family today. Once I loaded that shotgun and shot Maritza I could not stop and I did not stop until I had shot them all. It hurts inside and I really can't believe it is real. I am concerned how all of this may affect my enlistment in the Marine Corp. I am sorry for all of the trouble I have caused, it just hurts inside.

Statement completed April 27, 2006 12:25 AM. NCD X

X Nathaniel Cary Ditch

Witness: [Signature]
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