

SPRINGFIELD POLICE DEPARTMENT



PROBABLE CAUSE STATEMENT

Date: 06-03-09 Case #: 09-23860

I, Kevin L. Shipley, knowing that false statements on this form are punishable by law state as follows:

1. I have probable cause to believe that Skyler J. Russo, white/male, DOB 09-19-85, SSN [REDACTED] committed one or more criminal offenses.
2. The following crime(s) happened on or between 5-29-09/00:01 hours and 06-02-09/09:39 hours at 749 S. Nettleton in Springfield, Greene County, Missouri.
3. The facts supporting this belief are as follows:

On 6-2-09 at 0939 hours, SPD Patrol Officers Christina Farrand and Dewayne Davis responded to a "check the well being" call at 749 S. Nettleton where they contacted landlord Charles Tuck. Tuck stated he responded to the address to contact the residents, Judith Ann Roth and Skyler Russo. Tuck said he left a note on the front door of the apartment on 6-1-09 and when he returned on 6-2-09 he found the note still on the door, which he thought was odd. Tuck said he entered the residence at that time through the front door that was closed, but unlocked. Tuck said one of the two bedroom doors was shut and he noticed the lock had been turned around, so it faced the outside of the door. Tuck stated he removed the door lock, opened the bedroom door and observed a deceased female lying on the floor. Tuck then left the residence and contacted the police.

Officers Farrand and Davis then went inside of the residence to conduct a safety sweep and to look for the deceased female. Officer Davis said he observed a female lying in one of the bedrooms on the floor facing up. Officer Davis said her arms were spread apart (in the shape of a cross) and the word "DEATH" was written on the underside of her right forearm. Officer Davis noted that the female's face was covered with either a blanket or towel. Officer Farrand said she observed religious items all over the residence along with duct tape crosses located on the east side (749 S. Nettleton) of the duplex on the outside.

Detective Tony Vienhage spoke to Frances Bonner who lives at 747 S. Nettleton. Bonner said she heard a disturbance coming from 749 S. Nettleton early last Friday morning, 5-29-09, between 0130 and 0200 hours. During the disturbance, Bonner heard Judith Roth say, "God help me" and then it went quiet. Bonner was certain that it was Roth's voice. Bonner had not seen Roth since that time and stated the last time she saw Skyler Russo was on Saturday afternoon (5-30-09) around 1830 hours in front of the duplex.

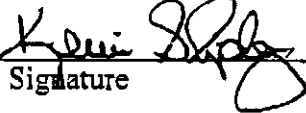
Greene County Medical Examiner Dr. Doug Anderson and Deputy Greene County Medical Examiner Tom Vandeberg responded to 749 S. Nettleton, where they confirmed that the female was a victim of a homicide. At that time, with the assistance of a recent photograph of resident Judith Ann Roth (dob 08-06-54) and other items of identification found at the scene, it was confirmed that the female homicide victim was Judith Ann Roth. During an examination of victim Judith A. Roth conducted at the scene, visible injuries to her facial area, along with a t-shirt found stuffed into her mouth were observed.

During the course of the investigation, the victim's son, Skyler Joseph Russo, was developed as a possible suspect. Search warrants were obtained for 749 S. Nettleton, Springfield, Missouri and 3556 S. Meadowlark, Springfield, Missouri. During the execution of the warrant at 3556 S. Meadowlark, Skyler Russo was

observed exiting the residence. It appeared that Skyler Russo observed the police officers surrounding his residence and then immediately went back into the house and shut the door. A short time later, Russo exited the residence and surrendered to authorities.

Skyler Russo was placed into custody and then transported to Springfield Police Headquarters for an interview. During a post Miranda videotaped interview with Cpl. Kevin Shipley, Russo admitted that he was responsible for causing the death of Judith A. Roth. As the interview continued, Skyler Russo admitted he was involved in a verbal argument with Roth that later turned into a physical altercation. Skyler Russo stated during the altercation, he pushed Roth to the ground and then began choking and striking her in the facial area. Skyler Russo admitted he struck Roth 20-30 times in the throat with his fist until she was unconscious. Skyler Russo also admitted that he stuffed a t-shirt into Roth's mouth during the assault. The information provided by Russo during the interview was consistent with physical evidence that was found at the crime scene. Russo advised he knew Roth was dead after he assaulted her.

The facts contained above are true.


Signature

6077
DSN

DETECTIVE
Title