

Rockford murder suspect captured

Written by Ed Gebert

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FORT WAYNE — The manhunt for the suspected killer of a Rockford woman is over. Daniel Charles Martin, 40, was apprehended Wednesday morning in Fort Wayne when deputy marshals and Mercer County detectives raided the home where Martin was staying. Aside from Martin, law enforcement agents found an AK-47 assault rifle in the home.

“Thankfully, we don’t have a lot of experience tracking fugitives outside of Mercer County, especially in a case like this that is so serious involving a homicide,” stated a relieved Mercer County Sheriff Jeff Grey. “The U.S. Marshal service was very helpful, jumped right in when we asked for help. They have some unique capabilities that they were able to bring to the table and they stayed with us every step of the way. Without their help, we’d probably still be looking for Mr. Martin. Thankfully, we were able to make an arrest. No one was hurt during the arrest. Now we’ll bring Martin back to Ohio so he can face the charges.”

Martin was sought in connection with the Nov. 8 shooting death of 26-year-old Melinda Shinn in the Rockford trailer home she shared with Martin.

According to a release, investigators had been tracking Martin for several days.

He is currently being held in the Allen County (Indiana) Jail. It is not known if he will fight extradition. If he does, it could take up to 60 days to bring him back to face charges. If not, he could be brought back to Mercer County as early as today.

“This fugitive investigation was one of our top priorities and we immediately added Martin to our most-wanted Dangerous Dozen list,” stated Northern District of Ohio Assistant Chief Deputy U.S. Marshal Andrew Deserto. “Thanks to the great teamwork with the Mercer County Sheriff’s Office and the U.S. Marshals in Fort Wayne, we were able to safely bring this dangerous fugitive into custody and remove another deadly weapon from the hands of a criminal.”

Back in November, the U.S. Marshal Service posted a \$2,500 reward for information leading to Martin’s arrest. No word was given Wednesday as to whether or not that money would be awarded as no information was released on how Martin was located. He was known to have family in Fort Wayne and his 1998 Ford Explorer was found abandoned in that city within hours

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of the discovery of the murder.

Shinn's body was discovered around 10:45 a.m. on Nov. 8 in the trailer she and Martin had shared for at least two years on North Street in Rockford. Rockford Police Chief Paul May made the discovery and performed an initial investigation before requesting the Mercer County Sheriff's Office take over. According to Grey, the victim's 9-year-old son was present in the mobile home at the time of the shooting, but was unharmed.

Reports noted that the couple had been arguing throughout the night of Nov. 7 and in the early morning hours of Nov. 8. Few details in the case have been released pending Martin's capture.