

# ATLANTIC COUNTY PROSECUTOR'S OFFICE

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**Prosecutor**

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## NEWS RELEASE

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**MAYS LANDING** – A Galloway Township man was sentenced today to 30 years in prison for killing his mother and niece, and attempting to kill his other niece in a brutal attack in August 2008 in his home, Atlantic County Prosecutor Ted Housel announced.

Ronald Weed, 42, was sentenced in accordance with a September plea agreement to two concurrent 30-year-prison terms with no period of parole eligibility for 30 years for murdering his mother Loretta Weed and his niece Kimberly McCarten. Weed also was sentenced to 10 years in prison to run concurrent to the murder sentence for the attempted murder of his niece Courtney McCarten, Chief Assistant Prosecutor Cary Shill said.

“Without question, this is one of the most heartbreaking cases to come before the court,” Shill stated. “There is nothing more tragic, there is nothing more terrible than dealing with the murder of a child. The circumstances and the brutality surrounding the killing make it more tragic.”

On Aug. 5, 2008, Weed attacked his mother and nieces using an axe, a blunt object and a knife. One of his nieces called 911 to say that her grandmother Loretta Weed, 65, was being attacked in her home at 465 South Nectar Avenue in Galloway Township. The woman died a few hours later. The defendant then turned his rage on his 12-year-old nieces Kimberly and Courtney McCarten. Courtney McCarten survived the attack but suffered severe injuries.

On Tuesday Courtney McCarten and other family members spoke prior to the Judge imposing Weed's sentence.

Courtney McCarten, now 14, told Superior Court Judge Bernard E. DeLury that her uncle “used an axe on my grandma.” She recalled how her uncle hit her with a blunt object after she walked in to the living room of the Galloway Township home and witnessed him kill her grandmother. She told the Judge that she fell to the ground and did not see what her uncle did to her sister Kimberly, but only heard her twin sister's screams.

The Judge also heard from Loretta Largo, the girls' mother and also the daughter of Loretta Weed. She urged the Judge not to sentence her brother to prison but rather commit him to an institution so that he could get the care he needs.

Chief Assistant Prosecutor Shill outlined several reasons why Weed needed to be imprisoned and while there is proof that the defendant suffers from a mental illness, the evidence shows that statements Weed made after the killings demonstrate that he knew his actions were wrong.

According to Galloway Township police officers who responded to Weed's home the morning of the incident, Weed stated, "I killed them, they're dead," Shill said. Shill asserted that the statement demonstrated that the defendant understood the nature of his actions. Shill further argued that Weed's statements, "Could they just execute me know and get it over with?" and that he did not want to answer questions until he talked to a lawyer showed that he recognized that his actions were wrong.

Judge DeLury agreed that Weed suffers from mental health issues, but said that the court must follow the law and the evidence in the case shows that the defendant was not criminally insane when he committed the crimes. Evidence showed that Weed's motivation for the attack was that "he believed he was being harassed by his family."

Judge DeLury further indicated that the question remains open as to whether the mental health system failed Ronald Weed; what is not in question is that there were three victims of a brutal attack and Weed committed the brutal acts

Weed told the court he did not wish to say anything on his behalf before sentencing.

**Anyone with information involving serious crimes is asked to call the Atlantic County Prosecutor's Office at 609-909-7800 or go to the Prosecutor's Office Web site at <http://www.acpo.org/tips.html> and provide information by filling out the form anonymously on the Submit a Tip page. People can also call Crime Stoppers at 609-652-1234 or 1-800-658-8477 (TIPS) or visit the Crime Stoppers Website at <http://www.crimestoppersatlantic.com/>. Crime Stoppers offers cash rewards for information leading to the arrest and indictment of those who commit crimes in Atlantic County.**