

Elmhurst real estate agent shot to death by ex-boyfriend feared for her safety

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March 11, 2008

An Elmhurst real estate agent fatally shot by a former boyfriend feared for her safety after she discovered that he plotted to destroy the home they shared, court records show.

When Cindy Bischof broke up with Michael Giroux last April, he agreed to move out of the Arlington Heights home she owned within two months. But within weeks, she learned he had written plans to destroy the house, according to a petition Bischof filed seeking an order of protection against Giroux.

Giroux accosted Bischof on Friday as she was about to leave her Elmhurst real estate office and shot her before shooting himself in the head, police said. Giroux, 60, whose last known address was in Palatine, died at the scene, and Bischof, 43, died at an area hospital.

The couple dated for about three years and shared the two-story house, before breaking up last spring, Bischof's family members said.

At that point, Giroux became "mentally unstable," according to Bischof's petition.

She forced him to move out May 17, and late that night, Giroux broke into the house, according to police and court records.

"He spray-painted walls, furniture, even the chandelier on the ceiling," causing as much as \$50,000 in damage and leading to a charge of criminal damage to property, Arlington Heights Police Cmdr. Kenneth Galinski said Monday.

Bischof was granted an emergency order of protection against Giroux that month.

Last summer, Giroux was arrested on a misdemeanor charge of violating the order, which barred him from any contact with Bischof, but he was released on bail in August, according to court records.

On Sept. 6, one day before Giroux was to appear in court on the violation charge, he tried to commit suicide by hanging himself on Bischof's patio, according to records.

Arrested in that incident, he was committed later that month to Cermak Hospital at Cook County Jail, where he was held on suicide watch.

A court-ordered psychiatric evaluation found that Giroux was competent to stand trial, but that at the time of the suicide attempt, he was likely suffering from depression exacerbated by “alcohol intoxication,” according to court records.

On Nov. 15, Giroux pleaded guilty to violating the order of protection in the Rolling Meadows branch of Cook County Circuit Court.

He was sentenced to the time he already had served in jail, plus 60 days of home confinement and a year of intensive probation, records show.

Giroux’s probation and a renewed order of protection were to last until November 2009.

Kim Kardas, a lawyer who represented Giroux when he pleaded guilty, did not comment Monday.

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