



ERIK NASARENKO
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NEWS RELEASE



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Ojai Man Pleads Guilty to Voluntary Manslaughter of Friend

VENTURA, Calif. – District Attorney Erik Nasarenko announced today that Cameron Scott Lykins (DOB 11/02/95), of Ojai, pled guilty to one count of voluntary manslaughter for the death of his friend, Houston Auer. Lykins also admitted to several special allegations and aggravating factors, including that he used a deadly weapon and had strike priors.

On May 12, 2019, Lykins bludgeoned Mr. Auer with a sledgehammer. The killing happened in Mr. Auer's bedroom at his grandmother's home, in Ojai. Lykins then exited the residence through the bedroom window, dragging Mr. Auer's body with him. After dumping Mr. Auer's body in the Angeles National Forest, Lykins fled to his mother's home in Lone Pine, where he arranged with his mother for authorities to be contacted.

Lykins was taken into custody on May 13, 2019, at his mother's home, by deputies with the Inyo County Sheriff's Department. Ventura County Sheriff's deputies transported him to Ventura where he was booked and charged with the murder of Mr. Auer.

Mr. Auer's body was found on June 23, 2019, by a Department of Fish and Wildlife warden who was patrolling a road in the Angeles National Forest.

On February 1, 2024, testimony at Lykins' first trial began. After eight days of testimony from approximately 26 prosecution witnesses, a mistrial was declared due to the inadvertent admission of evidence prior to a ruling on its admissibility. The case was set for retrial. Both sides were able to uncover new evidence that was not presented in the first trial. A review of that evidence tended to weigh against some of the motive evidence the prosecution relied upon. Prosecutors believed the additional evidence, which included verbal and text exchanges by Mr. Auer prior to his death, could impact their ability to prove malice.

Due to this additional evidence, prosecutors added voluntary manslaughter to the third amended complaint against Lykins, and he pled guilty to that charge.

Senior Deputy District Attorney Christopher Harman and Deputy District Attorney Hayley Moyer prosecuted the case.

“We are so grateful to the Ventura County Sheriff’s Office for their tireless investigation into this case, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife for their actions in locating the remains of Houston Auer,” Mr. Harman said. “Houston’s death was a tragic loss that could have been avoided and hopefully the defendant’s acceptance of responsibility helps his family begin to heal.”

Lykins is scheduled to be sentenced on May 17, 2024, at 9:00 a.m. in courtroom 48 of the Ventura County Superior Court. He is expected to receive 18 years in state prison.

Case: 2019015468

Defendant Information:

Cameron Scott Lykins (DOB 11/02/95)
Ojai

Charges pled to:

- PC 192(a) – Voluntary Manslaughter

Special Allegations

- PC 12022(b)(1) – Use of deadly weapon
- PC 667S2 – Prior Strike
- PC 1170(h)(3) – Prior serious or violent felony
- PC 667(a)(1) – Serious felony prior

