

Police: Nashville shooter hid mental health issues

BY JONATHAN MATTISE, KIMBERLEE KRUESI AND TRAVIS LOLLER ASSOCIATED PRESS

NASHVILLE, Tenn. — The shooter behind the 2023 Nashville elementary school attack that killed six people, including three children, had been obsessively planning it for years while hiding mental health issues from family and doctors, a police report released Wednesday reveals.

The nearly 50-page investigative case summary includes long-sought-after details of The Covenant School shooting and underscores the elaborate lengths the shooter took to research and plan a massacre at the Christian institution without provoking interference from mental health providers.

The prospect of releasing the shooter's writings sparked a legal battle.

Some of the documents have been leaked, and while Wednesday's report closes the Nashville Police probe into the March 2023 shooting, the fight over what else should be released — concerning that attack and others — is ongoing.

Early in the investigation, police suggested the shooter had written a "manifesto" detailing motives and intentions. Instead, the 28-year-old shooter, Audrey Hale, left behind "a series of notebooks, art composition books, and media files documenting plans and preparation for the attack, as well as life events and other motivations, police determined. Hale, who once attended Covenant, was killed by police.

Hale wanted to kill at least 40 people, hoping to inspire books, documentaries and movies, have the weapons placed in museums and his bed-

room preserved as a memorial, police found.

Hale sometimes used male pronouns, but the police report uses female pronouns, citing a state law definition of "sex" as "determined by anatomy and genetics existing at the time of birth." Police said Hale identified as male.

The report acknowledges but dismisses speculation that Hale's mental health providers could be criminally culpable for not intervening.

The report says Hale's parents and therapist had been concerned about his mental health for years. Psychological assessments conducted by Vanderbilt University Medical Center in 2019 and 2021 concluded Hale wasn't suffering from psychosis and recommended outpatient treatment.

"She had enough experience with the mental healthcare system to

understand which topics to avoid with her providers and how to manipulate them into believing her documented issues with homicidal and suicidal ideations were well in her past," it says.

Police found that as Hale's parents and therapists became more concerned, Hale became more manipulative. At one point Hale planned to kill his mother to prevent discovery, despite a "strong emotional attachment" to her, the report says.

Hale avoided using credit or debit cards on expenses related to the attack, knowing his mother could access the accounts. Hale also frequently removed attack-related material from his computer and cellphone so his mother wouldn't find it, police wrote.

Hale selected The Covenant School for a

few reasons, police said. He felt he would not be overpowered by the staff and students there. He figured he would gain notoriety for attacking a Christian school. And, he had happy memories of attending the school.

"Hale often remarked her time at The Covenant was the happiest she was during her childhood education," police wrote.

Police dismissed speculation about racial, religious or economic motivation in the shooting, saying "none of those motives impacted her decision to attack The Covenant," even though Hale "raged over these topics at times in her writings."

The report says Hale researched other shooting locations, including highly traveled roads and shopping malls.

As early as 2018, Hale was planning an attack on

Creswell Middle, a Nashville public school Hale attended after Covenant. Hale created detailed plans including a timeline. However, by March of 2020, Hale started to have doubts. Most of Creswell's students were Black and Hale worried about being labeled a racist, though he had "no qualms about killing anyone regardless of specific demographical categories," police wrote.

The report notes that Covenant had prepared for a possible school shooting, with blackout curtains and security bars for the classroom doors. Once staffers were aware of a shooter in the building, those precautions seemed to work. Hale wandered the hallways, unable to find targets and instead "shooting television sets, doors, and windows in places where nobody was present."

McCRACKEN CO. | GRAVES CO. | MARSHALL CO. | LYON CO. | CALDWELL CO. | MASSAC CO.

CLASSIFIEDS

CALL 1-800-599-1771 OR EMAIL: classifieds@paducahsun.com

LOG ON TO CREATE YOUR OWN: PaducahSun.com (click Classifieds at the top of the page)



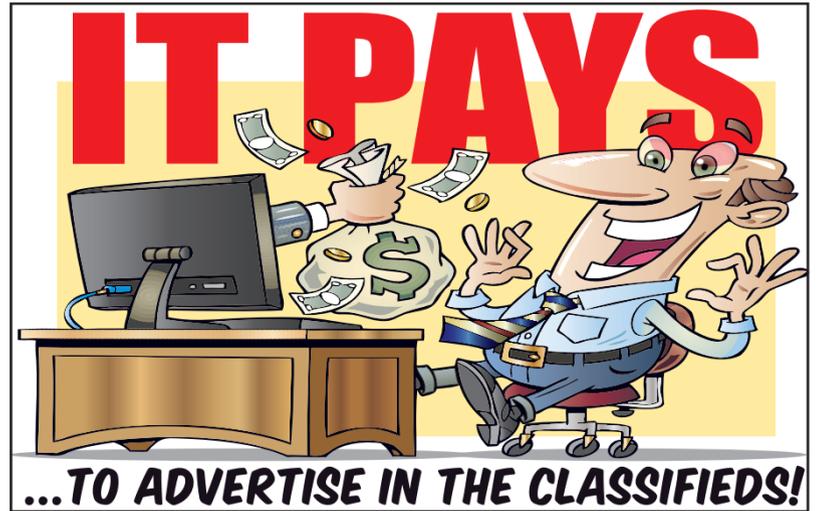
Buy and Sell across Western Kentucky & Southern Illinois.



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
AUDIO-VISUAL EQUIPMENT AND INSTALLATION
 The Paducah McCracken County Convention and Expo Center seeks proposals for audio-visual systems design, supply, and installation. The project includes upgrades to background music, paging systems, and comprehensive AV solutions for the Convention Center and Expo Space. For full RFP details:
Contact: Michelle Campbell, Executive Director
Email: michelle@paducahconventions.org
Phone: 270.408.1346
Proposal deadline: April 25, 2025
 The PMCCC reserves the right to reject any and all proposals.

0900 LEGALS

Local contractor seeking qualified DBE, MBE & WBE subcontractors & suppliers for work relating to civil construction in the Western Kentucky area. Email info@yeclic.com or call 270-247-1400 to request information regarding the project.



EARLY BIRD GETS THE PAPER

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS NEEDED FOR THE PADUCAH AREA

SHIFTS: EARLY MORNINGS TUESDAY - SATURDAY

Must Have: Valid Drivers License, Proof of Insurance, and Good Driving Record



TO APPLY CALL
Tonya Dickey at 270-575-8792 or
Email; tdickey@paducahsun.com