

Kalisz indicted in Hernando on two counts of murder and more

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BROOKSVILLE — A Hernando County grand jury indicted John Kalisz Wednesday in a bloody rampage last month that left two people dead, including his sister.

The indictment charges Kalisz, a 55-year-old roofer, with two counts of first-degree murder in the Jan. 14 shootings of his sister, Kathryn "Kitty" Donovan, 61, and her office manager, Deborah Tillotson, 59. He was also indicted on two counts of attempted first-degree murder in the shootings of his niece, Manessa Donovan, 18, and Amy Wilson, 33, an employee at Donovan's home business on Wilhelm Road.

Additionally, the grand jury charged Kalisz with burglary of a dwelling with a firearm and possession of a firearm by a felon.

Kalisz also is accused of killing Dixie County sheriff's Capt. Chad Reed in a shootout in Cross City after he fled Hernando County.

Kalisz is recovering from gunshot wounds sustained during the incident. He was recently transferred from Shands at the University of Florida hospital in Gainesville to the Hillsborough County Jail after officials determined the medical facilities in that jail would better serve his needs.

Prosecutor Pete Magrino, the chief homicide prosecutor in Hernando County, said he intends to seek the death penalty in this case.

"It's a tragic set of circumstances," Magrino said. "Not only did he kill two people but the surviving victims have to live with this for the rest of their lives."

In an update on Donovan's Web site Tuesday, Donovan's oldest daughter, Louanna, wrote that Manessa Donovan's recovery in a hospital remained "slow and steady." Manessa Donovan was two months pregnant at the time of the shooting and lost the fetus during surgery.

"There is a bullet still lodged in her back — they're leaving it there for now," she wrote. "She has to wear a brace to support her back when she gets up, and she'll have to wear the brace for another six weeks. They do not expect that bullet to give her any lasting trouble.

"The doctors and nurses here are very open to alternative therapies, and they've been more than accommodating to our doing light therapy with her," Louanna continued. "I've used blue (light) when her wounds are open to the air to help prevent any further infection, and red/IR on her everywhere to speed up her wound healing and relieve pain.

"Manessa is doing remarkably well. Mom would be very proud of her," she wrote.

Wilson was released from the hospital more than two weeks ago.

A Dixie County grand jury is expected to meet later this month to determine whether Kalisz will be indicted there in the death of Reed.

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