

Suspect admits role in killings, police say

Arrest affidavit describes late-night trip through West Hartford neighborhood

By DANIELA ALTIMARI
Courant Staff Writer

WEST HARTFORD — Vaughn Walker first acknowledged his involvement in the killings of a local couple while he was being questioned about another break-in, according to police documents.

Walker told police that he and an accomplice, identified only as "the man," were walking through the Hartford Golf Club on Halloween night when they saw a house on Mohawk Drive that they wanted to enter.

Walker, 19, of 267 Capen St., Hartford, has been charged with two counts of felony murder in connection with the slaying of John and Patricia Haugh of 50 Mohawk Drive. Roger Jones, 19, of 179 Palm St., Hartford, whom Walker described to police as his "best friend," also was charged with two counts of felony murder. They also face a string of burglary and larceny charges stemming from three other break-ins in the Haughs' neighborhood.

Both men were arraigned Tuesday in Superior Court in Hartford. Probable cause hearings have been scheduled for Dec. 20.

The arrest and search warrants outlining the murder charges against Walker and Jones have been sealed. But Walker described his involvement in the slayings when police questioned him about another burglary at 34 Mohawk Drive the night before the killings, according to an arrest affidavit.

Walker and "the man" were walking through the Haughs' neighborhood at about midnight on Oct. 31. Walker told police that he estimated the time by eyeing the moon's position in the night sky. Cars were coming down the street, so the two men chose to walk in residents' back yards, the arrest affidavit said.

After spying the dignified colonial-style home of Dr. John and Patricia Haugh, Walker and his partner "looked at it and looked around more," Det. Brian Enns wrote in an application for an arrest warrant.

The two also looked at other houses on the street, Walker told police, but settled on 50 Mohawk Drive. He then gave police an account of his involvement in the killings.

Detectives had suspected that

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Jones and Walker were responsible for other break-ins in the neighborhood. They found Walker's fingerprints in a Norwood Road house that was burglarized on Oct. 6. The owner of that house recognized Jones as the son of her part-time housekeeper.

Walker and Jones were arrested in connection with the slayings on Nov. 9. Last week, police arrested Vaughn Walker's aunt, Marie Walker. She was charged with tampering with evidence.

In another development, WFSB-TV reported that West Hartford police are investigating whether Hartford Deputy Police Chief James O. Berry interfered with their criminal investigation. Berry said he received a call from Marie Walker after detectives from Hartford and West Hartford arrived to search her Capen Street home. Identifying herself as a member of the local block watch, she said she did not see a search warrant and was concerned.

"I did tell her we had her nephew phone call when he's able to," Berry said. Marie Walker wanted to know details of the investigation but Berry said he could not discuss the case.

Berry said he did nothing to hamper the investigation. "What would motivate me to do something so stupid?" he asked.

West Hartford police are scheduled to talk with Berry today. But they also said he did not hurt their efforts.

"Nobody here is making any allegations against the deputy chief," said Det. Sgt. Jack Bannan of the West Hartford police. "If we had evidence to believe that he had tampered with evidence or hindered the investigation, we would have an arrest warrant."

Hartford Police Chief Joseph Croughwell said he stands behind Berry. "The information I have right now no way indicates that Chief Berry did anything to compromise the investigation," Croughwell said. "I have the ultimate confidence in him."

Courant Staff Writer Maxine Bern-

Affidavits say men admit killing West Hartford couple

By DANIELA ALTIMARI
Courant Staff Writer

WEST HARTFORD — Roger Jones and Vaughn Walker carried duct tape and a wooden souvenir baseball bat with them on Halloween night as they cased the stately homes along Mohawk Drive, according to arrest affidavits made public Tuesday.

The two had burglarized houses in the neighborhood before, but this was the first time they had come equipped with such items, police said.

Jones and Walker, both 19, have confessed to entering 50 Mohawk Drive early Nov. 1 and using the duct tape to bind Dr. John Haugh in the family room, police say.

Walker said he used the 2-foot baseball bat and his fists to beat and kill Haugh, his arrest affidavit states; Walker and Jones then placed Haugh's videocassette recorder and television in the doctor's blue Volvo.

After killing Haugh, the affidavits say, the men walked upstairs to the master bedroom, where they found his wife, Patricia Haugh, face down on the bed.

Walker, who is 6-feet-4 and 245 pounds, said he "pushed down on Mrs. Haugh to hold her still for some time and she probably couldn't breathe because of the pressure." Walker then noticed blood around her face and fled, the

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Police theorized the

Men confess to killing West Hartford couple

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affidavit states.

The medical examiner has ruled that Patricia Haugh, 70, was beaten and smothered. John Haugh, 68, died of "blunt head trauma," according to the affidavit.

Walker's lawyer, Karen A. Goodrow of the public defender's office, would not comment on the case. Jones will be appointed a special public defender Dec. 5. Joseph S. Elder, a lawyer who represented Jones during his last court appearance, said his client did not commit the crimes.

On Nov. 9, eight days after the killings, police charged Jones and Walker each with two counts of murder, one count of capital felony, two counts of felony murder, one count of first-degree burglary and one count of first-degree larceny.

According to investigators, at times during the intense questioning Walker became "emotional." He was described as "unaffected" and "smug." Both men waived their rights to have an attorney present, the affidavit states.

The two men were arrested after

police linked them to earlier burglaries in the neighborhood. On the night of the killings, police were pursuing Walker on a warrant issued the day before.

Both men have been charged with burglary and larceny in connection with a break-in Oct. 6 at a house on Norwood Road, where Jones' mother worked as a housekeeper. That house is about 1,000 feet from the Haughs' home. Walker also has been charged with breaking into another Mohawk Drive home Oct. 31.

Several people reported seeing Walker and Jones in the Haughs' blue Volvo in the days after the killings. The two kept the car until they realized police were looking for it. Then they parked it in a Bloomfield driveway and walked away, the affidavit states.

In addition to the television and videocassette recorder, Jones and Walker took the Haughs' credit cards, which they used to make purchases at Service Merchandise, police said Tuesday.

Courant Staff Writers Maxine Bernstein and Matthew Kauffman contributed to this story.

Trail begins with thefts, ends in 2 deaths

In eve of killings, police sought Hartford man on burglary charges

By DANIELA ALTIMARI
Courant Staff Writer

WEST HARTFORD — On the night police say Vaughn Elliott Walker was busy killing a local couple in their home, officers were pursuing him on a warrant issued the day before.

"We made an effort . . . but we couldn't locate him," West Hartford Det. Capt. James Gustafson said.

Walker and Roger Jones of Hartford, both 19, were arraigned Tuesday on charges of murdering Dr. John and Patricia Haugh in their Mohawk Drive home on the night of Oct. 31 or morning of Nov. 1. Shackled and handcuffed, both suspects listened as Judge Terence A. Sullivan more than doubled their bail to \$2.25 million apiece.

On the afternoon of Oct. 30, the night before the Haughs were killed, police obtained a warrant for Walker's arrest in connection with an Oct. 6 burglary on Norwood Road, not far from the Haughs' West Hartford home. Weeks before that, East Hartford police had taken

both Walker and Jones into custody on a stolen vehicle charge.

Tuesday in court, Prosecutor John O'Reilly said the state has "an extremely strong case" that reflects "a degree of premeditation" in the Haughs' killings.

But details of the police investigation remain sealed to the public and defense lawyers representing the two men.

Jones' lawyer was angered by O'Reilly's characterization, saying such statements could taint a case that could send his client to death row. "It is unduly suggestive," said Joseph S. Elder. "I don't know what they define as strong."

Investigators charged the two suspects with murder on Saturday, after questioning Walker following his arrest on the burglary warrant. Each faces two counts of murder and felony murder and one count of capital felony, larceny and burglary.

The capital felony charge means Jones and Walker could face the death penalty.

The courtroom Tuesday was

crammed with friends and relatives of the two suspects. Detectives who worked on the case stood in the rear. Jones, dressed in a white jumpsuit, appeared first and stood quietly as Sullivan advised him of his rights. He appeared alone because Elder was handling another court matter. Appearing afterward, Elder said his client did not commit the crimes. "All I know is that he's not guilty," he told a group of reporters.

After a 10-minute recess, sheriffs brought in Walker, who was wearing baggy pants and a striped shirt. When asked by Sullivan if he had an attorney, he shook his head no. But Patrick J. Culligan, chief of the capital defense unit of the chief public defender's office, stepped forward and said he was representing the defendant.

Walker and Jones are accused of beating John Haugh to death, then smothering Patricia Haugh as she lay in bed.

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Hartford man was sought by police on eve of killings

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Police said they found property belonging to the Haughs on Saturday when they searched the homes of Jones and Walker.

Detectives had obtained search warrants after focusing their investigation on the two men linked to a Jeep Cherokee reported stolen on Oct. 6 from a home not far from the Haugh residence.

Both Jones and Walker have been charged with burglary and larceny in connection with the Oct. 6 Norwood Road break-in. They also were charged in connection with a

and Walker has been charged with breaking into another Mohawk Drive home Oct. 31.

Defense attorneys for both men expressed concern that details about the murder case may prejudice a jury. "There seems to be a rush to judge, particularly in the media," Elder said.

Culligan also objected to the judge sealing the warrants, effec-

the case against his client. "It's completely inappropriate and it's a very silly way to play hide the ball," Culligan said.

Jones and Walker are scheduled to appear Nov. 19 in Superior Court in Hartford.

"There was every expectation they would encounter somebody in that house," Assistant State's Attorney O'Reilly said while asking for

men charged in West Hartford double homicide

By DANIELA ALTIMARI
and MARK PAZNIOKAS
Courant Staff Writers

WEST HARTFORD — Two young Hartford men with petty criminal records were charged with murder Saturday night in the deaths of John and Patricia Haugh, a prominent couple slain during a burglary at their home, police said.

Vaughn Elliott Walker, 19, of Capen Street and Roger Anthony Jones, 19, of Palm Street, will be presented Tuesday in Superior Court on capital-felony and other charges. They face the death penal-

ty if convicted.

Investigators found unspecified property stolen from the Haughs in each of the two suspects' modest homes, which are a walk of several miles from the upscale neighborhood of the Haughs on Mohawk Drive, near the Hartford Golf Club.

During the victims' funeral Saturday morning, the Rev. Henry P. Cody told mourners that the crime provided West Hartford with "the unwelcome insight that chaos lurks not far from our front door."

Alarm companies and locksmiths

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A16 THE HARTFORD COURANT: Sunday, November 10, 1996

Two Hartford men charged in slayings of West Hartford couple

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saw sharp increases in sales as residents rushed to secure their homes after the Haughs were found dead Monday. Police Chief James J. Strillacci said that the arrests should reassure residents.

"I think they're going to sleep a lot better tonight," Strillacci said.

John Haugh's brother, Thomas, said he is bewildered by the killings. "What a shame," he said during a telephone interview from his home in Montague, Mass. "You can't explain it. It's absolutely unexplainable."

He praised police for their quick work. But, he said, the arrest is only the beginning of a long and draining process.

"I'm an old Marine and I know what I'd like to do with them," he

said. "Let's just hope the courts take care of them."

As investigators had suspected since Monday, the killings occurred during a break-in the previous Thursday night or Friday morning, police said.

The bodies were found by a colleague of John Haugh, an orthopedic surgeon, after he failed to appear at his office Monday morning. A telephone line was cut; their Volvo was missing.

Investigators said Saturday that they believe the suspects walked from their homes in Hartford to Mohawk Drive and fled in the stolen Volvo after the burglary.

Police had been seeking Walker for another burglary in the Haughs' neighborhood even before their deaths.

Police arrested Jones at 4 a.m.



■ Walker

■ Jones

Saturday on a warrant charging him with the Oct. 6 burglary.

Both men were questioned all day, as a growing crowd of reporters gathered outside the West Hartford police station. After nightfall, police announced that a judge had signed warrants charging them in the Haugh killings.

Walker and Jones each were charged with two counts of murder, two counts of felony murder and one count of capital felony, as well as burglary and larceny, police said.

Chief Strillacci commended investigators for their quick and thorough work.

Sergeant Jack Bannan agreed. "Monday afternoon this was a real whodunnit. Less than a week later, we have two suspects in custody."

While investigators questioned the two suspects, friends and family members crowded into St. Timothy's Church to celebrate the many dimensions of the couple's lives.

"Two persons whose lives made such perfect sense . . . taken in a senseless act of violence," said their parish priest, Cody, as he stood before twin caskets, each draped with a white cloth.

The Haughs were a community-minded couple with a zest for life. Dr. Haugh, 68, wouldn't hesitate to rise at 4 a.m. if duty demanded. A captain in the U.S. Naval Reserves, he served during the Persian Gulf War. Mrs. Haugh, 70, a registered nurse known by the nickname Sparky, was president of the Friends of the Mark Twain House.

The couple loved to sail and ski. "They did not shrink from life," Cody said. "They embraced it."

At the funeral, the Haughs were remembered as supportive parents

Dr. Haugh could be "gruff and abrupt," William Haugh said. But "in times of smooth sailing, he could be counted on for pleasant company and at least one truly horrible joke." Mrs. Haugh was happiest making others smile, her son

added.

Alluding to his restless adolescence, William Haugh said he pushed the limits of his parents' patience more than a few times. But they stood by him, even though he "tested their love relentlessly."

Standing at the front of the large sanctuary, with its brick walls and thin slats of stained glass, William Haugh's soft words left many shuddering with sorrow.

"I'm more than a little mad at God right now," he said. But, he said, he takes comfort in the words of a friend, who reminded him to cherish the rich legacy of his parents' lives.

"I thank God for the stellas my parents are," William said, his voice cracking. "I

Murder suspects a puzzle

Both had history of petty arrests

By DANIELA ALTIMARI
Courant Staff Writers

Police believe Vaughn Walker and Roger Jones are petty criminals who were developing a habit of stealing electronics and cars from an elegant West Hartford neighborhood. But that doesn't explain murder.

"It puzzles us," Police Chief James J. Strillacci said Sunday. "They started out with fairly minor things. They just graduated rather quickly."

It puzzles Walker's aunt, too. "I don't know how he could be involved in something like this," said Marie Walker, from the house on Capen Street in Hartford's North End where she lived with her nephew. "I just don't get it. I'm not completely convinced he did it. He has no history of violence."

Walker and Jones, both 19, were charged with murder Saturday night. Police said the two men bludgeoned John and Patricia Haugh during a burglary of the couple's home on Mohawk Drive in West Hartford late Oct. 31 or in the early hours of Nov. 1. John Haugh, 68, was bound and beaten to death; Patricia Haugh, 70, was smothered, the state medical examiner has determined.

Property belonging to the Haughs turned up during a search of Walker's home and of Jones' house on Palm Street, police said. Both men will be presented Tuesday in Superior Court.

West Hartford police also charged Walker and Jones with several other burglaries in the neighborhood. Police said the two men walked from Hartford to the Haughs' elegant neighborhood to burglarize homes and steal cars.

Police charged Walker in connection with a Mohawk Drive break-in that occurred the night before the killings. The homeowner surprised two prowlers, and they fled.

Krissy Kern, whose parents live in that house, said they were profoundly unsettled by the intrusion. "They were really shaken up by it," she said.

The two arrests have restored a feeling of security, said Kern, 22. But she said her thoughts are with William and Elizabeth Haugh, the slain couple's children. "Our lives will go back to normal, but theirs will never be."

The random and brutal nature of the crimes has left many West Hartford residents searching for answers. Police said they have no reason to believe Jones or Walker were taking drugs when the crimes were

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Murder suspects had record of petty arrests

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committed. "We don't know what transpired in that house," Strillacci said. "It would be very comforting to have an explanation."

The two young men had been arrested before, according to police records. But in each case, the crimes with which they were accused were far less serious than murder.

Walker was charged on Jan. 10, 1995, with sixth-degree larceny in Berlin. Hartford police on Friday issued a warrant for his arrest on a charge of third-degree burglary stemming from a 1994 residential break-in.

Jones was arrested by Hartford police in April 1995 on charges of interfering with police and risk of injury to a minor, police said. In September 1995, he was charged with interfering with police and criminal trespass.

Jones also was charged with assault by Manchester police on Christmas Eve, 1995. He was accused of punching a store owner at the Lockland Hills Mall, police said at the time.

The outcomes of each of those cases could not be determined Sunday because the court system is closed.

Both men attended Weaver High School together. Principal Robert E. Morris said he remembers the two as "good kids."

Walker played basketball and was very good at it, Morris recalled. He "was always a young man that I respected," he said.

Though he did not know Jones as well, Morris said he did not remember him as a "troublemaker."

Like many others who know the men, Morris is grappling for answers. "I'm shocked really," he said. "I don't think those are the two people I knew at Weaver High School. Unfortunately, this is really

The random and brutal nature of the crimes has left many residents searching for answers.

sad." Jones, who graduated from Weaver High School, belonged to Trinity Pentecostal Church in Hartford but hadn't attended services in at least three years, said Patsy Taylor, the wife of the Rev. Paul Taylor. She described Jones as a sweet boy who may have fallen in with a bad crowd as he grew older.

When Jones was a youngster in her Sunday school class, he stood out as an ardent reader with a strong voice, Taylor said.

"I always said, 'Roger, don't give it up. You'll be a TV newscaster someday,'" she said.

Walker dropped out of Weaver, but had been planning to get his high school equivalency diploma and go to college, Marie Walker said. He had been working two jobs — one at a Wethersfield group home and another at a warehouse in Windsor, she said.

Walker's mother died when he was 5, Marie Walker said, and he was raised by his grandmother until she died in 1991. For the past three years, he had been living with Marie Walker.

"He's had a lot of losses in his life," she said. "But that's no excuse."

Walker said her nephew has not been allowed to call her from jail. She plans to attend his court hearing Tuesday.

"I feel so bad about the whole thing," she said. "I don't know what to do."

Courant Staff Writers Rita Niro and Tom Puleo contributed to this story.

West Hartford couple killed in their home

By DANIELA ALTIMARI
and MICHAEL GREENWOOD
Courant Staff Writers

WEST HARTFORD — A prominent couple was bludgeoned to death in their gracious, Colonial-style home on Mohawk Drive, apparently the victims of a burglary, police say.

The body of Dr. John Haugh was discovered Monday morning by his co-workers, who became apprehensive when the esteemed, 68-year-old orthopedic surgeon failed to show up at his Hartford office.

Haugh's colleagues crawled through an open window and discovered his body downstairs. Upstairs in the couple's bedroom, police found the body of his 70-year-old wife, Patricia, president of Friends of the Mark Twain House. Both victims were wearing sleep clothes.

The house was in disarray, which may have been the result of a struggle. Telephone lines were cut and the couple's 1996 Volvo station wagon was missing, police said. The car, a television and a VCR were missing, police said.

The bodies remained inside the home through the afternoon and evening, awaiting the state medical examiner, who arrived shortly after 8 p.m. One body was removed at 8:50 p.m.; the second at 9:20 p.m.

Police said they are not sure when the crime occurred. Det. Capt. James Gustafson said the couple may have been killed as early as late Thursday or early Friday. Satur-

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West Hartford couple found slain at home

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day's mail and newspapers remained stuffed in the mailbox, police said.

The Haughs' white-brick home was set off by yellow police tape as bloodhounds sniffed the landscaped lawn and the abutting Hartford Golf Course for clues.

The house may have been entered by popping open a window in a garage, which is attached to the house, said Assistant Police Chief Robert T. McCue.

A "tool-type item" that may have been used to beat the couple was found at the scene, said Police Chief James J. Strillacci. Police have recovered a crank handle, used to lower a car's convertible top, in the couple's garage and have sent it to a lab.

The neighborhood has been the site of other burglaries and attempted break-ins in the past two months. Early Thursday, a Mohawk Drive resident surprised two men in her dining room. The burglars fled, police said.

On nearby Norwood Road, which intersects Mohawk Drive near its eastern end, an intruder entered a home Oct. 6 while residents were asleep upstairs. Various items were taken, and a 1994 Chevrolet Blazer was stolen from the driveway. A 1991 Blazer had also been reported stolen from a Norwood Road home Sept. 27.

Police are not sure whether the crimes are linked.

"We can't tell for certain if they're connected, but we'd be foolish if we didn't look at them," Strillacci said.

Police had already stepped up patrols after those crimes, and will add even more.

"There are crimes everywhere in town," he said. "We don't have a crystal ball. Who would predict that burglars would come out and kill two people in the dead of night in their home?"

"It's like something unreal," said a resident of nearby Pilgrim Road, who asked not to be identified. "It's never going to happen to you. You read about it in the newspaper. When it happens right next to you, that's when you have the real fear."

Friends and colleagues remembered the Haughs as warm and gregarious. Their two children are grown. A son lives in San Francisco, and a daughter lives in Washington, D.C.

"They were just a lovely couple," said the Rev. Henry P. Cody of St. Timothy's Church, where the Haughs worshipped.

"Jack" Haugh, a stocky man with white hair and a ruddy complexion, was a "Yale man," Cody said. He enjoyed singing and was a member of the church choir.

Patricia, whose nickname was "Sparky," was a compact woman with a trim, athletic build. A graduate of Manhattanville College in Purchase, N.Y., she wore elegant clothes and was fond of hats with large flowers.

"She had a real flair about her haberdashery," said John Boyer, executive director of the Mark Twain House.

The Haughs enjoyed the out-



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WVIT-TV / Channel 30

■ John Haugh ■ Patricia Haugh

doors. They liked to ski and often took trips to the mountains of Utah. They also were members of the Hartford Golf Club — the back nine holes border their yard. "Two finer people you could not meet," said Steve Klemenz, the club's general manager. "They had such a nice way with everybody they met. We're all in a state of shock."

Marjorie Palm of Avon, a friend of the Haughs and a director of Friends of the Mark Twain House, said Patricia Haugh was also active in the St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center auxiliary and the Institute of Living. "She was very hard-working, very community-minded. She made quite a contribution to her community, to her church and to her college. We are just devastated."

Patricia Haugh grew up on Long Island and loved the ocean. Her husband had bought her a sailboat, which he christened Sparky in her honor, and they spent many weekends at their condominium in the Connecticut River town of Essex.

When the couple failed to show up for church Sunday, many of their fellow parishioners assumed they had spent the weekend on the shoreline, Cody said.

Haugh joined the medical staff at St. Francis Hospital and Medical Center in 1960. He served as chairman of the orthopedic department from 1982 to 1985.

He was a captain in the U.S. Naval Reserve. During the Persian Gulf War, Haugh spent almost a year on a military base in the United States.

"He was a wonderful guy," said Robert W. McAllister, one of Haugh's four partners. "He was very close to retirement."

Courant Staff Writer Theresa Sullivan Barger contributed to this story.