

February 21, 2025
For Immediate Release

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Brenda Spencer, Dubbed the ‘I Hate Mondays’ Killer, Denied Parole

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) said today the woman who opened fire on a San Diego elementary school as a teen in 1979, killing two people and injuring nine others, has been denied parole following the strong objection of prosecutors. The decision to deny release for Brenda Spencer, 62, came after a Board of Parole hearing which included three victim statements and input from the District Attorney’s Office. During its deliberation, the Board considered Elder and Youthful Parole Laws when reaching its decision.

“The shock of this brazen crime rippled through the community in San Diego at the time and it continues to hold a place of infamy in the history of mass shootings in our nation,” said DA Stephan. “While new laws are in place that can potentially speed up releases for individuals who were convicted as minors, as well as inmates who are over 50 years old, our position is that the totality of the horrific circumstances of this crime and this case do not warrant release and we are gratified that the Parole Board agreed with our position.”

On the morning of Monday, January 29, 1979, Spencer began shooting from her house at children waiting for 53-year-old Principal Burton Wragg to open the gates to Grover Cleveland Elementary School. She injured eight children. She began with nine-year-old Cam Miller, since he was wearing Spencer's favorite color, blue. Spencer shot and killed Wragg as he and teacher Daryl Barnes tried to help children. She also killed 56-year-old custodian Mike Suchar as he tried to pull a student to safety. A 28-year-old police officer, Robert Robb, had responded to a call for assistance during the incident, where he was wounded in the neck as he arrived.

After firing thirty-six times, Spencer barricaded herself inside her home for several hours. While there, she spoke by telephone to a reporter. Spencer told the reporter she had shot at the school children and adults because, "I don't like Mondays. This livens up the day."

Spencer was charged as an adult. She pleaded guilty to two counts of first-degree murder and assault with a deadly weapon. On April 4, 1980, a day after her 18th birthday, she was sentenced to concurrent terms of 25 years-to-life in prison. Under the terms of her sentencing, Spencer became eligible for hearings to consider her suitability for parole in 1993.

Spencer has been denied parole in 1993, 2001, 2005, 2009 and 2022. She is currently imprisoned at California Institution for Women in Chino. Spencer is often regarded as the first modern high-profile school shooter. She is eligible for parole again in 2028.

The DA's Lifer Unit is responsible for handling parole hearings for inmates serving life sentences in California state prisons. The unit's main role is to represent the interests of victims, their families, and public safety by advocating against the release of dangerous offenders when appropriate.

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About the San Diego County District Attorney's Office

The San Diego County DA's Office prosecutes all felony crimes in the county and misdemeanor crimes committed outside the City of San Diego. The office files about 40,000 criminal cases a year and balances prosecution with numerous crime prevention programs. District Attorney Summer Stephan leads the office of more than 1,000 dedicated employees who pursue fair and equal justice, and support victims daily across San Diego County.

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