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San Marcos Man Sentenced to Prison for Killing His Mother with a Hammer

San Diego County District Attorney [Summer Stephan](#) announced today that a 32-year-old San Marcos man, who pleaded guilty in October to the first-degree murder of his 68-year-old mother, has been sentenced to 31 years-to-life in prison.

In June 2021, Sean McCarthy broke into the home of his parents through the back sliding door and attacked his mother in her bedroom after his father left for work. Using a hammer, he beat his mother to death and stuffed her body into the trunk of her car in the garage then fled and set himself on fire in his own car in Escondido.

“This is a horrific case of murder and elder abuse that affects an entire family and the community in which the parents lived,” DA Stephan said. “When a life is taken by a family member, nothing can make the family whole again, but today’s sentence provides a measure of justice for the defendant.”

McCarthy survived the car fire but was left permanently disabled. In addition to first-degree murder, he also pleaded guilty to residential burglary.

Deputy District Attorney Ben Barlow prosecuted this case.

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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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