

Vickers sentenced to life

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QMI Agency

OSHAWA – Marc Vickers was welcomed into Michelle Barnoski's family and then helped her 14-year-old son murder her — and for that, he was sentenced to life in jail with no possibility of parole for 25 years Wednesday.

"The murder of Michelle Barnoski was an act of sustained and vicious savagery," Justice Bryan Shaughnessy said in handing down his sentence. Pointing to the "brutal nature" of the crime — the 33-year-old Warkworth woman suffered a broken hand and arm before her 14-year-old son shot her seven times in the head and once in the neck — Shaughnessy told Vickers, "Your actions have sealed your fate and you have lost the support of a family who genuinely cared for you."

This "ultimate act of violence... has taken the life of a vulnerable woman in the prime of her life," Shaughnessy said.

Vickers, now 37, has been in custody since his arrest June 11, 2008.

As a child, Vickers had been abused by "a brutal father who assaulted him at will, for no reason half the time," creating a dark past he carried with him throughout his life, defence lawyer Gary McNeely said before sentencing.

"Mother left home because she couldn't stand the abuse she was subjected to, leaving Mr. Vickers and two sisters to take it," McNeely said. "Mr. Vickers took the blame for things he didn't even do so the father would exercise the physical violence on him rather than his sisters."

"You see before you a man who is a product of that environment. This is a tragedy in all ways."

Vickers's criminal past was peppered with convictions for theft, several break and enters and mischief before he entered into a relationship with Barnoski's sister, Nina Pelletier, several years before the murder.

He gained the warmth and trust of Pelletier's family and, for "a considerable number of years," appeared to have rehabilitated himself, Shaughnessy said.

His life "began to unravel" after he and Pelletier split in 2007, Shaughnessy said.

With Barnoski and her son left in the home with Vickers, the atmosphere "became intolerable" for Barnoski.

"She was crying and upset that her son Cody and Marc Vickers had turned against her, that they whispered behind her back, that chores around the home were not

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Local news

AWARDS

Colborne parade entries celebrated

MANDY MARTIN

COLBORNE — Santa celebrants were rewarded Dec. 5 with Hoselton Sculptures awards for the best entries in the Nov. 27 Colborne Santa Claus Parade.

Colborne Rotary club cleaned up at the special ceremony at the Colborne

Legion, taking the Ken Palmer Memorial trophy for best overall float as well as the Rose Nelson Memorial trophy for best depiction of the parade theme, A Parade of Trees.

Brighton Speedway won for best commercial; Colborne Public School for schools; Castleton/Colborne

Brownies, Guides and Pathfinders for youth group; Royal Canadian Legion Br. 187 for best service club entry; the Chapman family for family entry; and the Awender group for best single walkers.

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MANDY MARTIN photo

Colborne Rotary Club cleaned up in the awards department at the Nov. 27 annual Santa Claus Parade. The Ken Palmer Memorial Trophy for the best overall entry, plus the Rose Nelson Memorial Trophy for best depiction of the theme, were presented to Rotary Club member Don Spencer, right, by parade committee member Bob Rusk.



MANDY MARTIN photo

The Chapman family won the best family entry in the 2010 Colborne Santa Claus Parade. (From left) Parade committee chair Tracey Loveless of the Colborne Legion presents the award to Travis, Beth and Ada Chapman.



MANDY MARTIN photo

Colborne Public School won the best school entry in the parade. Parade committee member Tracey Loveless of the Colborne Legion, left, presents student Maddy Awender with the award.

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being done and that the level of cleanliness could only be described as a pig sty,"

Shaughnessy said.

Pointing to victim impact statements submitted by Barnoski's family upon Vickers' conviction, Shaughnessy said: "The pain and anguish of this family and friends over the death of Michelle Barnoski is most evident as they grieve and search for the answer of the unfathomable question, why did this have to happen?"

Indeed, following the sentencing, Pelletier said she still bears the guilt of bringing Vickers into her family and that she will forever be haunted by her sister's death. The mix of guilt and betrayal she feels has left her "unable to trust myself at all," a tearful Pelletier said outside the courtroom.

"It's like a nightmare you expect to wake up from every day," she said. "Am I satisfied? I believe justice was done. Nothing's going to bring her back."

As part of his sentence, Vickers was placed under a lifetime firearms prohibition and ordered to provide a DNA sample. His two rifles that were entered as exhibits during his trial were also ordered forfeited.

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