



Scott Alexander Greenberg Sentenced to 30 Years for 2013 FL Slaying of Cell Mate Kelly Damon Harding

Deputies: Pinellas inmate strangled to death cellmate

An inmate in the Pinellas County Jail was charged Sunday with strangling to death his cellmate in a fashion that resembles the way authorities say he killed his girlfriend, deputies said.

Scott Alexander Greenberg, 28, of St. Petersburg faces first-degree murder charges in the death of Kelly Damon Harding, 48, deputies said. Authorities said it is the first homicide at the county jail.

Greenberg was awaiting trial on a second-degree murder charge from in the 2012 death of his girlfriend.

Harding, a transient, had been in the jail since Oct. 27, serving a one-year sentence on a burglary charge, records show.

Since November 2012, Harding had been under protective custody status because of his disruptive behavior, where he was checked every 30 minutes by a deputy, said Sheriff Bob Gaultieri in a press conference Sunday. Harding had made racial slurs toward other inmates, spit on other inmates, thrown water on staff and defecated in the recreation yard, Gaultieri said.

Harding spent most of Saturday in a cell by himself, until 9:55 p.m., when Greenberg transferred from the Pinellas County Jail Healthcare Facility, where he was under observation after he fell in the shower and hit his head earlier in the day. Greenberg was also under protective custody for aggressive behavior. He had swung at a staff member and had a history of fighting other inmates, Gaultieri said.

The cell was put on lock down at 11 p.m. and deputies performed all of the necessary checks. But at 12:58 a.m. six minutes after their last check, deputies responded back to the cell because Greenberg was yelling, "Man down," Gaultieri said.

The man down was Harding, who was in cardiac arrest on the floor with about 6 ounces of wet toilet paper crammed down his throat, Gaultieri said. He was pronounced dead at 2:35 a.m.

"We'd have to get into his head to figure it out, but what's clear, I believe from the statements he's made, is that he had a plan and he executed the plan," Gaultieri said.

Greenberg refused to be interviewed by detectives, but just before he called for help, he yelled to another inmate, "I did it, it's done," Gaultieri said. When the other inmate asked him what he had done, he replied, "What I'm in here for," Gaultieri said.

In August, Greenberg told police he accidentally strangled his girlfriend to death when the two were engaged in consensual sex while at the Kenwood Inn Hotel in St. Petersburg and was later charged with second degree murder.

Police say Jennifer Lee Zale, 27, was found inside a room at the hotel, strangled with toilet paper stuffed down her throat.

"The injuries Harding suffered are very, very close, if not identical, to the same injuries Jennifer Zale suffered when she was choked," Gaultieri said. "In fact, some of the same bones in her neck are the same bones that were broken in Harding's."

Greenberg told police Zale willingly participated in sexual asphyxia and her death was an accident. There is no sign that Harding suffered any sexual abuse, Gaultieri said, or that the two knew each other before becoming cell mates Saturday night.

Deputies also learned that earlier Saturday night, Greenberg had told other inmates that he "was not going to do life in prison" and wanted to go to death row, Gaultieri said. When deputies discovered Harding, Greenberg told them they needed to make the cell a crime scene because Harding was dead.

The cell was one of several in a unit that housed 23 inmates, Gaultieri said. There is a shortage of cells, so it's not uncommon for inmates to share, he said. As a general rule, violent inmates aren't grouped with non-violate inmates, but Gaultieri said matching inmates based on history is "an art, not an exact science."

This is the second incident involving a Pinellas County Jail inmate in custody this month. On July 6, Thomas Morrow, 59, was beaten in the back of a transport van by another inmate. Gaultieri said the sheriff's office is conducting a thorough investigation of Sunday's slaying, but there are no lapses in security policies.

The jail books, on average, about 48,000 people a year and holds 3,000 inmates a day.

"Things happen from time to time, but just because you have one incident doesn't mean you have a big problem," Gaultieri said. "I think we have a problem with society where people want to brutalize each other and certainly we take all the steps we can and should to make sure people stay safe."

Greenberg, who has an extensive criminal history, is in a single isolation cell at the jail.

Source:

<http://www.cncpunishment.com/forums/showthread.php?8245-Scott-Alexander-Greenberg-Sentenced-to-30-Years-for-2013-FL-Slaying-of-Cell-Mate-Kelly-Damon-Harding>
[Greenberg, an inmate at the Pinellas County Jail in Florida, was accused of killing](#)