

### **3 HELD IN LIVONIA KILLINGS - POLICE SAY THEY'RE CONFIDENT THEY HAVE STRONG CASE**

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**Three** men were **in** custody late Tuesday who police say are responsible for the slayings of **three** generations of a **Livonia** family.

**Livonia** Chief Peter Kunst said two Detroit men **in** their 30s were apprehended early Tuesday and a third man from Flint, also **in** his 30s, was arrested shortly before 10 p.m.

"I'm confident that we have a strong case," Kunst said, praising detectives who logged 20-hour days during the holiday week to solve the case. Police said evidence was seized.

Wayne County Prosecutor Mike Duggan said his office would decide on charges Thursday. He said he's confident the right men are **in** custody.

"I've been a resident of **Livonia** for 40 years, and I've never felt safer than tonight," Duggan said.

Police have said robbery may have been a motive **in** the **killings** of Marco Pesce, 38, and his children -- Carlo, 12; Sabrina, 9, and Melissa, 6. Pesce's mother, Maria Vergati, 68, was also killed. The family's St. Martins Street home was ransacked and items were missing.

Still on Tuesday, family members mourned. The children's grandfather shared details of Diane Pesce's last visit with her family Saturday.

Diane Pesce sat **in** an Ann Arbor rehabilitation facility as Marco Pesce, who had divorced her **in** April after a troubled relationship addled by her drug use, extended an invitation, her father said.

Marco Pesce told her she was welcome home to visit their **three** children anytime.

"The house is open. It's your place. It's open anytime," Samuel Jameel recounted Tuesday. "It's your house."

Not long after Marco Pesce headed home, he and the kids were killed along with Pesce's mother .

Jameel said he spoke with his daughter Monday.

"Her tears, they wouldn't stop," he said.

**Livonia** Police Executive Lt. Benjamin McDermott said Tuesday he couldn't comment on the investigation or on Jameel's account of the family's final hours.

**Livonia** police would not comment on any connection Diane Pesce may have had with the **three** men **in** custody.

Earlier, McDermott said Diane Pesce had been questioned and was not a suspect.

Jameel said his daughter told him the family left Ann Arbor about 5:45 p.m. Saturday for the half-hour drive to their home **in** a subdivision north of 7 Mile. Marco Pesce then went to work nearby at his Italia jewelry store on 7 Mile.

Carlo Pesce soon called his father at the store and said there was a problem with one of his sisters, something "serious," Jameel said his daughter told him.

On Monday, police said Carlo Pesce called the store about 5:45 p.m. Someone at the store called the Pesce home about 7:15 p.m. and got no answer, police said.

Jameel said he doesn't know who might have killed the family.

"It looks like people with no conscience," he said. "They didn't have to kill the kids. It could be someone with a grudge, maybe revenge. I don't know."

He said he has not come to terms with the deaths.

Jameel said his daughter may go to the house with police to select burial clothing for the children.

According to court records, Diane Pesce has a history of going **in** and out of drug treatment programs. During divorce proceedings this year, Wayne County Circuit Judge Kathleen McCarthy ordered her to admit herself to an **in** -patient program and then attend at least **three** Narcotics Anonymous meetings a week.

Marco Pesce filed for divorce **three** times, saying his wife was addicted to crack cocaine and had taken their children to drug houses while she bought narcotics.

**In** January, Pesce won a court ruling granting him temporary custody of the children and ordering his wife to move out of their home because of her drug use.

Marco Pesce first filed for divorce **in** January 1998. At the time, he was granted a personal protection order against his wife. The case was dismissed **in** April 1998, apparently because the two reconciled.

Jameel said his daughter and her ex-husband may have fought occasionally, but the disagreements were minor. Jameel said he didn't know about drug use, but his daughter had problems with depression and may have had a breakdown.

On Tuesday, he preferred to remember his grandchildren.

Carlo was the smart one, Jameel said. About eight months ago, he scored way above average on an intelligence test. Sabrina was quiet and serious. Melissa, the youngest, was "a real honey."

"She was always happy."

He paused and bent his head.

"Oh, my God."

Visitation for the Pesce family will be 4-9 p.m. Saturday and noon-9 p.m. Sunday at Harry J. Will Funeral Home, 37000 Six Mile, **Livonia**. Services will be at 11 a.m. Monday at NorthRidge Church, 49555 North Territorial Road, Plymouth. Burial will be **in** Holy Sepulchre Cemetery **in** Southfield.

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Caption: Photo

Marco Pesce, 38 Maria Vergati, 68 Carlo Pesce, 12 Sabrina Pesce, 9 Melissa Pesce, 6

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