

Haine Announces First-Degree Murder Charges After Body Discovered In Alton

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE — A Ferguson, Mo., man was charged Friday, Jan. 5, 2024, in the death of a Maryland Heights, Mo., man after a body was discovered in Alton in a wooded area on Lincoln Avenue.



Madison County State's Attorney Tom Haine and Alton Police Chief Jarrett Ford announced Friday that a 44-year-old Ferguson, Missouri, man - Antonio M. Baker - has been charged with first-degree murder in connection with the death of a man whose body was discovered in a wooded area of Alton. The 34-year-old victim found in the wooded area was Andre T. Hawkins of Maryland Heights, Mo.

Alton Police took Baker into custody Thursday night in Missouri, less than 48 hours after the discovery of the victim's body. A municipal worker discovered the body of Hawkins shortly after noon Wednesday in a wooded area along Lincoln Avenue. Hawkins suffered numerous gunshots.

Baker was being held Friday afternoon at the St. Louis County Jail, pending extradition to Madison County. Haine's office has filed a petition to deny pretrial release for the defendant.

Circuit Judge Kyle Napp ordered that Baker be held pending a hearing on the detention petition. Haine said he expects the evidence at trial will show the killing was not a random attack, but rather the result of a dispute that happened in Missouri.

"Why this occurred in Alton is unknown," Haine said. "All parties involved were residents of Missouri. But choosing to bring any violence to our streets is a very poor decision. In Madison County, we take violent crime very seriously, and will aggressively prosecute this heinous act. Our law enforcement agencies and the State's Attorney's Office are working hard to keep our neighborhoods safe and to secure justice for victims when crimes do occur, wherever those victims are from."

Haine commended Alton Police and other law enforcement agencies involved in the investigation, along with Assistant State's Attorney Luke Yager and other prosecutors assigned to the Violent Crimes Unit at the State's Attorney's Office.

Ford thanked multiple agencies that collaborated with Alton Police in the investigation: St. Louis County Police Department, St. Louis County Prosecutor's Office, Illinois State Police, Madison County Coroner's Office, Madison County State's Attorney's Office and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF).

"I am incredibly proud of my detectives involved in this investigation. They prove time and time again why committing violent crime in Alton is a bad decision. They don't stop until the job is done," Ford said.

Both Ford and Haine offered condolences to the family and loved ones of the victim.

"Our condolences go out to Andre's family and friends," Ford said. "It is my hope that Andre's family and friends find comfort in knowing that the Alton Police Department and the many agencies involved in this investigation have worked tirelessly to seek justice for Andre."

This charge and the statements made herein are based upon probable cause. The defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.