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Clinton Township woman accused of murdering elderly mother via abuse or lack of care

Defendant let mother lay on floor for two days before calling 911

Ann Marie Walsh talks to her attorney, Michael Steinberg, on Wednesday at her felony murder trial in Macomb County Circuit Court for the 2019 death of her elderly mother. MACOMB DAILY PHOTO/JAMESON COOK

By **JAMESON COOK** | jcook@medianewsgroup.com | Macomb Daily
PUBLISHED: May 5, 2022 at 7:32 a.m. | UPDATED: May 5, 2022 at 6:06 p.m.

A 58-year-old Clinton Township woman faces a murder trial this week for the death of her sick, elderly mother by either physically abusing her and/or providing necessary care for her.

Ann Marie Walsh is charged with felony murder and first-degree and second-degree vulnerable-adult abuse for the August 2019 death of her 85-year-old mother, Barbara Ann, after township emergency were called to the apartment they shared on Grange Street off Harper Avenue north of Metropolitcan Parkway. Felony murder is punishable by life without parole.

Barbara Walsh died Aug. 31, 2019, from sepsis, with blunt force trauma as a contributory factor, after 26 days at McLaren Macomb hospital in Mount Clemens.

Assistant Macomb County Prosecutor Jeffrey Hall told the 14 jurors in opening statements in circuit court Wednesday they could convict Walsh on one legal theory or that she, as the sole caretaker of her mother, failed to provide necessary care and created a high risk of death by abusing her in the first or second degree.

Hall cited numerous injuries found on Barbara when Fire Department personnel responded to their residence shortly after 10 a.m Aug. 5 and found Barbara on her back on her bedroom floor.

“She had bruises all over her face, all over her body; she was non-responsive,” Hall said. She also was diagnosed with pneumonia, chronic brain bleeding, rib fractures, acute gastronomical bleeding, kidney injury, a sternum fracture and nasal fractures, he said.

“The fact that she left her for two days on the floor without treatment in effect caused her death,” Hall said.

Ann Walsh told fire captain David Heino, who is now retired, at the scene that her mother had fallen out of bed two days before and she could not get her up. Walsh told him her mother was “too weak to get up,” but also said she was “combative” when she tried to get her up, said Heino, who often referred to his written report during his testimony Wednesday because he said he has limited recollection of the call and could not identify Walsh.

“She did say she was slightly confused about how she got onto the floor.” he said.

Police found blood spattering on the bedroom wall, ceiling, bed headboard and bed sheets, Hall said.

Walsh attributed dents found in the bedroom wall next to her mother’s bed to her throwing coffee cups at the wall, although she said she did not throw them at her mother.

Hall said neighbors will testify they heard “loud banging noises” from the apartment, “like things were being thrown,” and heard a voice say, “Ann, stop hurting me.”

Defense attorney Michael Steinberg during his opening statement countered Hall by saying Walsh’s injuries are inconsistent with being assaulted. He noted she also suffered from anemia so bruised easily and had osteoporosis so her bones were “porous” and fractured easily.

Assistant Macomb County Prosecutor Jeffrey Hall makes his opening statement Wednesday at the trial of Ann Marie Walsh in Macomb Circuit Court.MACOMB DAILY PHOTO/JAMESON COOK

He suggested during cross examination of Emergency Medical Technician Sean Dalton that she probably broke her nose when she fell, which caused her to suffer bruises under her eyes.

Sean Dalton of the Clinton Township Fire Department testified Wednesday during the Ann Marie Walsh murder trial in Macomb County Circuit Court in Mount Clemens.MACOMB DAILY PHOTO/JAMESON COOK

Steinberg also proposed during Dalton's testimony that his performance of a "sternal rub" on Barbara Walsh caused her sternum fracture. The method is used by first-responding medical professionals to determine the level of consciousness of a patient by activating a pain stimulus. Dalton said he does not believe the procedure would cause a fracture, and that it did not produce a response from Barbara Walsh.

Dalton described the condition of the home as "pretty disheveled,

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h is scheduled to last about one week, is scheduled to continue Thursday afternoon in front of Judge James Biernat Jr. in Mount Clemens.

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