

# OFFICE OF THE ANOKA COUNTY ATTORNEY

Tony Palumbo, County Attorney

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2100 3rd Avenue, Suite 720, Anoka, MN 55303  
763-324-5550  
anokacounty.us/attorney  
twitter.com/AnokaCountyAtty  
facebook.com/AnokaCountyAttorneysOffice

## **Media Contact:**

Elizabeth Mohr, ACAO Community Relations Coordinator  
elizabeth.mohr@co.anoka.mn.us  
763-324-5471 (desk)  
612-619-8345 (cell)

**March 6, 2018**

## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

### **Guilty plea in murder of 95-year-old Anoka man**

Isaiah Montrell Thomas, 28, pleaded guilty in Anoka County District Court today to one count of an indictment for first-degree murder while committing a felony.

Thomas admitted in court that he entered the Anoka home of 95-year-old Albert Loehlein on Nov. 26, 2016 to commit a burglary. Thomas entered the home and was confronted by Mr. Loehlein. Thomas then used a flashlight and a clock to hit the victim several times, resulting in Mr. Loehlein's death.

Anoka County District Judge Barry A. Sullivan accepted the guilty plea and set sentencing for April 9. Under criminal court rules, the remaining counts are dismissed when the plea is accepted.

In April 2017, an Anoka County Grand Jury issued an indictment against Thomas for first-degree premeditated murder, first-degree murder with intent while committing a felony, and second-degree murder with intent but not premeditated.

At the time of the murder, Thomas was awaiting sentencing on another burglary in Ramsey County.

The Anoka County Sheriff's Office, with assistance from the Anoka Police Department, investigated this crime. Sheriff's crime lab investigators retrieved forensic evidence from Mr. Loehlein's home that linked Thomas to this crime. He was apprehended within 48 hours of the murder as he was preparing to flee Minnesota.

"This was a horrendous crime, committed on a very vulnerable man, that shocked and saddened this community" said Tony Palumbo, Anoka County Attorney. "After discussions with Mr. Loehlein's family, we feel this was an appropriate conclusion to the legal aspect of this tragedy."

A statement from the Loehlein family is attached.

The Family of Al Loehlein thanks the Anoka City Police, the County Sheriff's Office, Detective Lee and staff, County Prosecutor Wade Kish and his staff, County Attorney Tony Palumbo, the Victim Services Staff, the Crime Lab and forensic staff in addition to other law enforcement agencies.

The immediate response of the police and sheriff's office and the outstanding work of the law enforcement agencies helped to solve the brutal murder of our Dad in his home in an incredibly swift time frame. The professionalism and skills of everyone involved in solving and prosecuting this crime demonstrates their dedication to the safety of the citizens.

Our Family also wishes to acknowledge the overwhelming support from extended family, friends, and community throughout this tragedy. Everyone's out-pouring of care and concern helped our family through this very difficult ordeal. We are reminded of how widely our Dad was known and cared about in the Anoka Community and beyond.

Our Family supports the decision to accept the First Degree Murder Guilty Plea. This plea helps to bring closure for us. We want to remember the good long life that Dad lived.

The Family of Albert John Loehlein  
March 6, 2018