

It's hard to say if James Matthew "Matt" Caudill truly has any idea of the severity of the charges filed against him in the robbery and shooting death of respected Austin businessman John M. Turner on November 7.

But after the initial hearings conducted by Scott Circuit Court Judge Roger Duvall late on Friday morning, November 13, the idea might be starting to penetrate through the cool, relaxed demeanor which he displayed in the courtroom.

John Turner, owner/operator of John's Jewelry and Coins in Austin, was killed by a robber who went into his tiny store around 3:30 p.m. on Saturday, November 7. He died of a single gunshot to the head at Scott Memorial Hospital an hour or so later after the crime was committed.

Matt Caudill, 21, and his brother, Christopher M. Caudill, 31, both of Austin, were detained by officers on Monday, November 9, in connection with the robbery/murder, with Matt Caudill being formally arrested on an outstanding warrant in a pickup truck theft back in September.

Family members and friends, including the murdered man's two daughters, their husbands and a grandson and his wife, all watched silently as Matt Caudill, 21, was first informed of the charges filed against him in the Turner case.

The brothers were brought in together by jail officials and separate of other inmates, whose cases had been handled earlier that morning by Judge Duvall. Sheriff Dan McClain, Chief Deputy Don Campbell, two Indiana State Police detectives and several other deputies as well as one Scottsburg officer ringed the courtroom. Sgt. Jerry Goodin of the ISP Sellersburg post took a seat in the jurors' box directly behind the pair.

None of the officers spoke to the brothers, except for instructing them to sit and be quiet. Neither brother looked at the some 25 people attending the hearings, preferring to stare straight ahead and watch the judge as he shuffled a few papers prior to opening the hearings.

The brothers looked slightly worse for wear since their arrests on November 9. Christopher M. Caudill, 31, sported new hair on his previously-shaved head. Their beards had lost a groomed look. Each wore baggy black-and-white striped jumpsuits and bright orange slippers issued at the jail. They came in chained together. After Judge Duvall was seated, he requested that Matt Caudill be seated at the table reserved for the defense.

Each of the Caudills is now a defendant in two Circuit Court cases. In the Turner murder, Matt Caudill is charged with capital murder, felony murder, robbery

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causing serious bodily injury, robbery with a deadly weapon, resisting law enforcement and obstruction of justice, all felonies of various levels. He is also charged with a misdemeanor of carrying a handgun without a license.

Prosecutor Jason Mount also informed the Judge that the State of Indiana has filed the State's intention of seeking life without parole if Caudill is convicted of murder and an additional penalty, or time added to his sentence, for use of a firearm. It means that an additional five to 20 years could be added to the sentence if Matt Caudill is convicted of capital murder, felony murder and/or robbery causing serious bodily injury.

Reckoning on the advisory sentences of each count and a maximum enhancement in this case alone, Matt Caudill could be sentenced to as much as 158½ years if found guilty of all charges.

Matt Caudill is also the main suspect in an October 11 armed robbery which happened at the Fuel Mart on North Dowling Drive in Austin.

The early morning incident allegedly involved Caudill coming into the Fuel Mart armed with a

handgun, possibly the same one he used on November 7, and robbing an attendant of over \$500.

When he was served on November 9 with the warrant for his arrest in an October auto theft case filed in Superior Court by ISP Detective Brian Busick, he reportedly had a silver stainless steel .38 cal. revolver. The Fuel Mart employee told the Austin officer investigating the crime, Sgt. Robert Gudgel, that the man "...pointed a shiny gun in her face..."

The gun in question as well as a security camera and surveillance tape, clothing and items from the Turner robbery were recovered from the wooded and weed-infested area around the mobile home where the brothers lived with their mother, Patricia Caudill.

Officers also collected a statement from Matt Caudill's girlfriend, Ginger Cox, that he had told her about the Fuel Mart robbery, according to the probable cause affidavit.

This case involves a Level 3 felony count of robbery, Level 3 felony criminal confinement, Level 6 felony pointing a firearm and a Class A misdemeanor of carrying a handgun without a license.

Judge Duvall entered a preliminary plea of not guilty to all of the charges for the younger Caudill and again accepted a State's motion from Prosecutor Mount for an enhanced sentence because of the use of the gun.

No bond was set in the murder case, ensuring Matt Caudill will remain in jail until his trial or trials, which the judge initially set for April 12, 2016, in both cases. A bond of \$200,000 by corporate surety bond or full cash was set in the Fuel Mart case.

A public defender will be assigned to both cases.

Christopher Caudill's charges in connection to the November 7 murder include Level 5 felony assisting a criminal, Level 6 theft, Level 6 obstruction of justice and A misdemeanor carrying a

handgun without a license. Thus far in the investigation, authorities cannot prove that the older brother had an active role in the robbery-murder. He is believed to have assisted Matt Caudill with hiding evidence, however.

Additionally, Christopher Caudill is charged with dealing in methamphetamine, a Level 5 felony; possession of methamphetamine, a Level 5 felony; and possession of drug paraphernalia, a Class C misdemeanor.

The probable cause affidavit states that Matt Caudill had asked his brother to take \$300 and buy methamphetamine. Chris Caudill apparently did so because when he was detained by officers on November 9, he allegedly had a small baggie of meth crystals, a spoon with meth residue on it and several \$100s in his pockets. He also allegedly gave ISP detectives a statement saying he went to "...a known methamphetamine source..." and purchased the illegal drug, later delivering some to his younger brother.

Bond in each of the cases was set at \$100,000 by surety bond or by full cash. Chris Caudill's initial jury trial date for each case is March 29.

He too is scheduled to receive a public defender.

Judge Duvall then closed the hearings. The Caudill brothers were marched back to the Scott County Security Center. Again, neither looked at the people who had watched the proceedings.

Their mother, Patricia, was charged last week with aiding a criminal who has committed a felony. That is a Level 6 felony, and the charge is filed in Superior Court. Her initial hearing was held on November 12, and she filed a cash bond of \$3,000 that same day and was released to await her trial, currently set for February 16.

Ginger Cox was also in Superior Court on November 12.

She had an initial hearing on the September 15 theft of a pickup truck owned by a Morgan Foods Inc. employee. The truck was apparently stolen from the company's lot while the employee was at work.

Statements had been obtained from several sources about the whereabouts of the pickup, found parked behind the Caudill mobile home by Deputies Jac Sanders and Joe Guarneri. Persons were able to place both Matt Caudill and Cox in the pickup, documents noted.

Matt Caudill had his initial hearing on the matter on November 10. Both are charged with auto theft, a Level 6 felony, and unauthorized entry of a motor vehicle, a Class B misdemeanor.

Not guilty pleas were entered for both defendants in this case, and their bonds were increased from \$15,000 by corporate surety bond or 10% cash to \$45,000 surety or \$4,500 cash via a State's petition for detainer and/or greater-than-standard bond. Under the detainer granted, each was ordered held for 15 days without bond.

Caudill's jury trial has initially been set for February 9; his girlfriend's jury trial is set for February 11.

Public defenders have also been assigned to these cases, according to court records.