

Men may face death if convicted in killings

James Howze and Lonnie Munn are accused of fatally shooting Joseph and Nancy Militello and their nephew Angelo Rosales in August.

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Two men accused of shooting three family members earlier this year will face the death penalty if they are convicted.



James Lindsey Howze



Lonnie Robert Munn

Third Judicial Circuit State Attorney Robert L. "Skip" Jarvis announced Friday morning that he was seeking the death penalty for James Lindsey Howze, 38, and Lonnie Robert Munn, 47.

The men were arrested at a campground in southern Minnesota in September and charged in connection with the Aug. 25 shooting deaths of Joseph Militello, his wife, Nancy Militello, and a nephew, Angelo Rosales, inside the family's rural Suwannee County home.

Howze and Munn were indicted by a grand jury on conspiracy to commit home invasion robbery and murder, three counts of first degree murder, three counts of home invasion robbery and murder and three counts of kidnapping.

A third suspect in the case, Keith Allen Hughes, was being held in the Suwannee County jail on charges connected to the case when authorities say he committed suicide. Investigators have said Hughes had worked for the Militellos and might have tipped off the other two suspects about large amounts of cash being kept at the home.

"I have carefully weighed the facts of this case and have waited to have an opportunity to personally speak to the members of the family," Jarvis said. "After doing so, I am convinced that the death penalty is warranted in this case."

Jarvis also said he does "not take the imposition of the death penalty lightly. To ask that the state be authorized to take a defendant's life is the ultimate punishment that can be imposed."

No date has been set for Howze and Munn to be tried. Under Florida law, if a jury convicts someone in a death penalty case, the same jury will consider whether to recommend the death penalty to the judge, and the final decision will be made by the judge.