

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

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## *Pair Found Guilty of Leicester Home Invasion*

WORCESTER — A Worcester Superior Court jury today found two men guilty of a 2014 Leicester home invasion in which three residents were bound and gagged and a Marine's Purple Heart medal was stolen along with cash and jewelry, according to Worcester County District Attorney Joseph D. Early Jr.

Timothy Lavin, 39, of Leicester, and Nicholas Desiderio, 36, of Worcester, were each found guilty of three counts of armed robbery while masked along with home invasion. Mr. Lavin was also found guilty of possession of a firearm without an FID card, possession of ammunition without an FID card and operating a motor vehicle after suspension.

Judge Richard Tucker scheduled sentencing for March 1. Mr. Lavin faces enhanced penalties if he is found guilty that day as an armed career criminal.

Mr. Lavin and another man broke into a home in the Cherry Valley section of Leicester on Jan. 5, 2014, while Mr. Desiderio, a former employee of the house owner, waited outside. Mr. Desiderio's role was in planning the home invasion and serving as getaway driver. The third suspect has not been caught.

The two men tied the hands of the victims – the owner, his daughter and her boyfriend -- and put duct tape over their mouths before raiding a safe in the living room.

The Purple Heart, which was given to the owner of the house by his father, a World War II veteran who was injured in the battle of Iwo Jima, was never recovered.

“This was a horrific crime, made more egregious because this was a former employee who turned against his employer,” Mr. Early said. “The Purple Heart was awarded to the victim’s father after he landed on Iwo Jima and was wounded on Mount Suribachi. The medal was a family heirloom that the family had hoped to treasure forever. It reminded them of his heroism and sacrifice.

“I commend the Leicester Police, State Trooper Albert Kardoos and analyst Cara Graham of the New England State Police Investigation Network for their investigation. I also want to commend Assistant District Attorneys Joseph Simmons, Dannon Stacer and Nathaniel Beaudoin for their hard work and careful presentation of the case and the jury for reaching a just verdict.”

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