

Man convicted in fatal synagogue shooting

by UPI

WEST PALM BEACH, Fla. - An 81-year-old Florida man faces life imprisonment following his conviction for mortally wounding another man in a Boca Raton synagogue. Marc Benayer, who has been diagnosed as being in the early phases of Alzheimer's disease, represented himself at his trial. After the jury found him guilty late Wednesday, a lawyer who had been assisting him with his defense asked for a competency hearing, which was scheduled for Friday, The Palm Beach Post reported. Benayer admitted shooting Jonathan Samuels in the back at the Chabad Weltman Synagogue in October 2005. But he claimed that the shooting was accidental. Samuels died nine months later. Benayer's former girlfriend, Maria Pinto, worked for Samuels and his business partner, Mark Levy. Benayer believed the three were conspiring against him, while Levy said that he and Samuels were helping her escape an abusive relationship. Benayer is also charged with arranging to kill Levy and another man.

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