

Murders in Morrison County, MN

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Date	Victim(s)	Suspect(s)	Outcome
1857	Fritz	Charles Gigabish, Jo Shambo, James ? (last name unknown)	The three suspects, two of whom were Objiwe, one of whom was Metis, supposedly murdered a German pack peddler by the name of Fritz. While they were being taken by Sheriff Pugh to St. Paul for prosecution, they were lynched by a group of men from Morrison County. The three men were taken to a tree near what is now the Little Falls Golf Course and hung. The lynching took place on August 17, 1857. In June 1901, the bones of the three lynched men were dug up.
June 29, 1866	Daniel Borman	Jo Roy	For description of events, see the book "A Big Hearted Paleface Man: Nathan Richardson and the History of Morrison County, Minnesota," pg. 204-205, 308-309.
Spring 1871	Barney Kenney	Robert Kenney	Robert Kenney was convicted of second degree manslaughter in killing his brother Barney and sentenced to State Prison for 6 years. From the book "A Big Hearted Paleface Man: Nathan Richardson and the History of Morrison County, Minnesota," pg. 205, 309.
November 10, 1873	Mrs. Thomas Heverin	Thomas Heverin	Thomas Heverin was found guilty of first degree murder in the death of his wife. He was sentenced to life in State Prison. From the book "A Big Hearted Paleface Man: Nathan Richardson and the History of Morrison County, Minnesota," pg. 205-206, 309-310.
July 12, 1876	Peter Tennice, Sr.	Mike Butala	M. Butala was found guilty of first degree murder in the shooting death of Peter Tennice, Sr. From the book "A Big Hearted Paleface Man: Nathan Richardson and the History of Morrison County, Minnesota," pg. 206, 310.

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October 1, 1877	Nes-pim-ing	Albert Jordon	Albert Jordon was found guilty of killing Nes-pim-ing and served 4 1/2 years in State Prison. From the book "A Big Hearted Paleface Man: Nathan Richardson and the History of Morrison County, Minnesota," pg. 266-268.
February 11, 1878	Florian Meyer	Unknown	Florian Meyer was stabbed at a party, the wound proving fatal. Further information is unknown. From the book "A Big Hearted Paleface Man: Nathan Richardson and the History of Morrison County, Minnesota," pg. 311.
November 24, 1888	Franklin "Frank" Eich	Albert Bulow	Frank Eich of Buckman, MN, was found shot in the neck on November 24, 1888. He had been seen driving his wagon with an unknown man, who took off with the horses and wagon after killing Eich. The unknown man was Albert Bulow, who was caught in Verndale and confessed to killing Eich. During his March 1889 trial, Bulow pled guilty and was sentenced by Judge D. B. Searle to be hanged. Bulow was hanged at gallows constructed near the Morrison County Courthouse on July 19, 1889, thus being the only person in Morrison County to have been legally executed.
October 1, 1892	Gust Artmann	Alexander Gravel, Nicholas Casa	Artmann, Gravel, and Casa were involved in a scuffle involving a pitchfork on the road to Rich Prairie, which resulted in Artmann's death. Casa was released because there was no case found against him. Gravel was tried and found guilty of manslaughter in the first degree. He was sentenced to 7 years hard labor at the state prison in Stillwater, MN.

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December 2, 1893	Albert R. Kosanke	John Welter	Welter was found guilty of murder in the first degree after the jury deliberated for 22 hours. He was sentenced to life in prison at the state prison in Stillwater, MN. After serving 19 years in prison, he was considered for a pardon because the evidence against him had been circumstantial. He was paroled in 1918 and released from prison, having maintained his innocence from the beginning.
February 26, 1895	Andrew Kunza		Incomplete information on case
August 2, 1896	Daniel Clough (aka Daniel Klof)	Erick Eckman	Eckman was officially indicted for murdering Clough (there were plenty of witnesses to the crime) and was sent to the county jail to await trial. More research is needed to determine the outcome.
August 23 or 24, 1901	John McGrath	Walter Anderson (aka Walter Clark)	There was a long search for the men who murdered McGrath. Three were supposedly involved, but only Anderson was caught. He was indicted for first degree murder and highway robbery, but pled guilty to third degree murder. He was sentenced to 30 years in the state prison at Stillwater, MN. Anderson and his sister sought a pardon in 1903. His sentence was commuted to 10 years in 1904.
December 28, 1903	William J. Snow	Charles Snow	Charles Snow claimed he killed his cousin William in self-defense when he was arrested by Sheriff Tanner. After Charles' arrest, the county attorney received a letter saying that Charles was wanted in Idaho for the charge of stealing horses. Charles was formally charged with first degree murder for killing William Snow. During his trial, his attorney argued that the killing was in self-defense. The jury found Charles guilty of second degree murder and he was sentenced to life in the state prison at Stillwater, MN.

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June 28, 1904	Frank Winier (aka Frank Wagner)	Kate Winier (aka Kate Wagner), John Kardasch	When Kate Winier was arrested for the murder of her husband, she claimed that two tramps had entered the home, one holding her, while the other beat her husband. The Little Falls Daily Transcript reported that while Kate was being held in jail, she confessed to the murder and implicated John Kardasch in the murder. Kardasch was taken into custody. Kate denied making the confession and Kardasch's role in the murder. Kardasch was released after questioning due to a lack of evidence against him. Kate later claimed that John Peka helped her kill Frank, but there is no report of Peka being arrested. Kate was indicted for first degree murder. A jury acquitted her of the charge. Language played a role in the case as Kate only spoke Polish, while most of those involved with the trial spoke English. Kate was the first woman in Morrison County tried for murder.
April 1905	Anna Kintop	Archie Cyrus, William Bailey, Joseph Kennedy, Hugh Kennedy, Alfred A. Frederickson	Unsolved. When Anna Kintop's body was found, a witness claimed "two negroes" had been seen in Darling, where Kintop was last seen alive. Though there was a search for the "two negroes" and several had been arrested, none were charged with the murder and no other suspects were found in the time immediately following the murder. In late February 1909, Archie Cyrus was charged with Kintop's murder. Around the same time, William Bailey and Joseph Kennedy were also arrested for the murder. Bailey and Cyrus were released within days of being arrested. Joseph Kennedy was released because 2 men could vouch for his whereabouts during the murder. Alfred Frederickson and Hugh Kennedy were released following a hearing.

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September 26, 1906	Fannie/Fanny Sussman	Henry Sussman (aka Joseph Weller & Fred Tyler)	Henry murdered his wife in a Minneapolis, MN, hotel. Fannie was Fannie Messenger of Morrison County. The two had been married on March 23, 1905, in Little Falls. Henry confessed to the murder. He stood trial for the murder in Minneapolis and was convicted of murder in the second degree.
May 1, 1907	Gertrude Kuffell/Kuffel	Theodore Wieherski	Wieherski claimed he shot Kuffel accidentally, while trying to shoot a woodchuck. Prior to her death by peritonitis from the bullet, Kuffel said that Wieherski was drunk and pointed the gun directly at her. Wieherski was charged with first degree manslaughter. He was released on a \$1,000 bond. Outcome unknown. Further research needed.
August 16, 1908	William Gollnik	Mathilda Gollnik	William Gollnik was beaten in his home on August 13, 1908. The beating was so severe that he remained unconscious for several days, finally dying on August 16, 1908. Mathilda Gollnik, wife of William, was charged with second degree murder in his death. 133 men were examined in order to select 12 to sit on the jury. (LFDT, Oct. 7, 1908) Mathilda was found guilty of second degree murder and was sentenced to life in Stillwater State Prison. In 1914, Mathilda was declared insane and was taken to the Fergus Falls hospital.
June 18, 1911	Amilia Martin	Theodore Martin	Theodore Martin confessed to shooting his wife. He was charged with first degree murder and given a life sentence in state prison. He escaped from prison in November 1913 and was recaptured.

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September 17, 1911	Frank R. Gourd	S. S. Durham	Durham was charged with first degree manslaughter, to which he pled not guilty. He was released on a bond of \$3,000. He stood trial and was found guilty of second degree manslaughter. He was sentenced to an indeterminate amount of time in the state prison. In January 1912, the jury petitioned to have Durham pardoned. More research needed to determine outcome.
May 12, 1912	Nettie Page	Tony Schiter (aka Anton Schnider , John Kropel, Schmitt)	After he was arrested, Schiter confessed to murdering Nettie (Mrs. F. J.) Page. Schiter was sentenced to life in prison at Stillwater, MN.
March 30, 1917	Viola Beveridge	Ben Coen, Roy McGregor	"Viola Beveridge, 8 year-old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. William Beveridge was run over and killed ... by an automobile driven by Ben Coen and Roy McGregor" at the corner of 4th Avenue and 4th Street NE in Little Falls. (LFDT, March 31, 1917) Coen was charged with second degree manslaughter as the driver of the car. McGregor owned the car and was also charged with second degree manslaughter. Coen was found guilty of second degree manslaughter and sentenced to an indeterminate time in the state prison at Stillwater. McGregor was found guilty of the same charge and was also sentenced to the state prison. No word on how much time they served, as the sentence could be between 1 and 15 years.

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July 12, 1918	Tillie Wozniak, Louis Wozniak, Walter Wozniak	John Wozniak	John Wozniak confessed to killing three of his children - Tillie, age 8, Walter, age 6, and Louis, age 5 - because he thought they would starve to death due to crop failure. He was charged with three counts of first degree murder. He was given a mental examination by six doctors and determined to be sane to stand trial. He pled guilty and was sentenced to life in prison at Stillwater, MN. On July 20, 1920, John hanged himself in prison prior to be transferred to the St. Peter Hospital for the criminally insane.
September 1920	James Clark	James McCall	McCall was charged with first degree murder for shooting Clark during a robbery on a train and throwing Clark from the train near Randall. Clark did not immediately die and identified McCall prior to death. McCall attempted to hang himself in the county jail after being arraigned, but was found before he was seriously injured. Further research is needed to discover outcome of the case.

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July 6, 1921	Eugene Lavoy (George Lavoy & Dave Lavoy wounded)	George Lavoy, Leon Thompson, Homer Green	Both victims and suspects were involved in a moonshine-related "melee" with several other men ("a posse of citizens") and a constable. The posse and constable were attempting to arrest them. George Lavoy and Leon Thompson were charged with assault with dangerous weapons with intent to kill and later with resisting arrest. Homer Green was charged with first degree murder for shooting Eugene Lavoy. George Lavoy and Leon Thompson were released on \$1,000 bail each. Constable Otto Beckner was charged with non-feasance in office for failing to fulfill his duties during the melee. He was released upon providing a \$700 bond. Dave Lavoy was charged with first degree assault on an officer for his part in the melee. A grand jury failed to indict Homer Green. Otto Bechner was indicted on six counts of charging malfeasance in office. Dave Lavoy was found guilty of third degree assault and fined \$100. This incident was complicated.
November 6, 1921	Axel Bergstrom	John Goodhope	John Goodhope, age 14, confessed to shooting Axel Bergstrom, who was driving at the time. Goodhope said that "he was shooting at one of the glasses in the back end of the automobile top." (LFDT, November 7, 1921) He was charged with third degree murder. He pled guilty to first degree manslaughter and was sentenced to serve in Red Wing. Further research needed on how long he served.
April 5, 1927	Mary Kinney	William J. Kinney (aka Jesse William Kinney)	Mary Kinney was charged with first degree murder for killing her husband, William J. Kinney, with an axe. Mary Kinney was found to be insane when she committed the murder and was "committed to the insane hospital at St. Peter." (LF Herald, April 22, 1927)

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November 3, 1927	"John Doe" Unidentified man	Carl Van Hercke	Carl Van Hercke was charged with first degree manslaughter for shooting an unidentified man on a haystack after being awakened in the middle of the night by a commotion on his farm. Van Hercke assumed he had shot an animal. He found the body the following day and went to the Sheriff to explain what had happened. Van Hercke pled not guilty and was released under a \$2,500 bond. A jury found Van Hercke not guilty.
October 26, 1930	Frank Puchalla	Unknown	Frank Puchalla's death was the result of a hit-and-run driver. An inquest was held to examine the evidence in the case, but it appears no further progress was made.
November 4 & 5, 1930	Ottillie Francisca (Unger) Joseph (aka Tillie Fernger Joseph), Edward Joseph (aka Eduard George Joseph)	Edward Joseph	Both victims, mother and son, were found shot to death . Newspaper articles indicate Edward had shot his mother and then shot himself.

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December 19, 1941	August Dehler, Regina Dehler, Anna Mae Dehler, Kenneth Dehler	Richard Dehler	Richard Dehler, son of August & Regina and brother of Anna Mae and Kenneth, confessed to killing his family "because he was 'tired of being bossed around.'" (LFDT, Dec. 20, 1941) Richard was 16 at the time of the crime and was indicted on four counts of first degree murder and one count of first degree arson. While being held awaiting trial, Richard and fellow prisoner Ted Grest broke out of jail. Both were captured within days. Richard was convicted to life in prison on January 24, 1942, for killing his mother. Richard's counsel asked for dismissal of the three remaining murder charges, but this was not granted. In 1959, after spending 17 years in Stillwater State Prison, Richard received a new trial because officials did not follow proper procedures for his age when he was first imprisoned. He was once again indicted on four counts of first degree murder. He pled guilty to second degree murder and was again sentenced to life in prison.
August 17, 1946	Walter Anderson	Elroy Edward Hazeman	After a manhunt of two months, Elroy Hazeman was apprehended in Fargo, ND, where he confessed to murdering Anderson. Hazeman was indicted for the murder of Anderson and then declared insane. He was sent to "the St. Peter hospital for the dangerously insane" in December 1946. (LFDT, Dec. 7, 1946) He was still at the state hospital in December 1960.

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July 24, 1951	Laura Brausen	John Pankratz	According to John Pankratz, he was giving Laura Brausen, age 17, a ride home when she jumped from his vehicle and was rendered unconscious. Pankratz took the girl home and put her in bed with her cousin, who awoke to find her body. Pankratz was charged with second degree manslaughter in the death of Brausen. He was also charged with selling liquor to a minor - Arthur Preimesberger, age 19. The manslaughter charge was later changed to first degree murder. Pankratz was convicted of second degree manslaughter and sentenced to 1-15 years in the St. Cloud Reformatory. (LFDT, Dec. 5, 1951) Pankratz appealed the conviction in 1953. Outcome of the appeal is unknown.
February 13, 1954	Paul Peka	Albert Peka	Albert Peka was charged with first degree manslaughter in the shooting death of his father, Paul Peka. He pled guilty and was sentenced to between 5 and 20 years at the Stillwater prison.
July 10, 1959	Julius Voeller	Shirley Voeller	Shirley Voeller, age 14, admitted to shooting her father Julius due to his maltreatment of her and her sisters. Shirley was charged of first degree murder as a juvenile but the charges were dismissed by Judge Charles A. Fortier, "who declared the girl acted in self defense." (LFDT, July 20, 1959)
September 8, 1962	Chloe Bartholomew	Leo Bartholomew	A warrant was issued for the arrest of Leo Bartholomew, who was charged with first degree manslaughter for the beating death of his mother Chloe. Leo left town after his mother's death. The result of the case is unknown because information is incomplete.

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October 15, 1965	Andrew Herlitz, John Stack	Anton Olson	Anton Olson was charged with first degree murder on two counts for shooting Sheriff John Stack and Deputy Andrew Herlitz. Olson pled guilty to third degree murder and was sentenced to up to 40 years in Stillwater State Prison.
April 10, 1970	Roger Arkuszewski	Richard Zaun	Richard Zaun, librarian at Healy Senior High School in Pierz, was charged with first degree murder in the strangulation death of Roger Arkuszewski, an 18-year-old student. Zaun entered a plea of not guilty. He later pled guilty to first degree manslaughter and was sentenced to up to 15 years in Stillwater State Prison.
November 25, 1970	Anton Kuklinski	Unknown	Anton Kuklinski was found shot to death at his farm southeast of Buckman. His wife Elizabeth was found shot and in a coma. There's a news report of her condition - she came out of the coma - but nothing further is known about the case because the file is incomplete.
February 26, 1973	Cletus J. "Bud" Reintjes	Stephen John Greenwood	Stephen Greenwood was charged with second degree murder in the beating death of Cletus Reintjes. He entered a plea of not guilty to the charge and later pled guilty to first degree manslaughter.
October 4, 1973	William John "Jack" Tedford	Samuel Cleneth Tedford	Cleneth Tedford shot his son, Jack, over a dispute about the operation of the family farm. After shooting Jack, he immediately shot himself. Cleneth was pronounced dead at the scene. Jack was brought to the hospital but died shortly after arriving.

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September 1974	Mary Reker, Susan Reker	Unknown	Mary and Susan Reker, sisters ages 15 and 12, disappeared September 2, 1974. They were from St. Cloud, but Mary was attending St. Francis High School in Little Falls. Their bodies were found September 28, 1974 in a quarry just outside of Waite Park. They died from multiple stab wounds. The crime has never been solved. There is currently (2011) a \$50,000 reward being offered for information leading to the arrest and conviction of whoever is responsible for the murders. http://www.spotlightoncrime.org/case_reker_marysusan.cfm Tips can be reported to the Stearns County Sheriff (320/251-4240) or the MN Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (651/642-0610)
March 4, 1975	Jacqueline Roseanne Dreiling	James Michael Kelly	James Kelly was charged with first degree murder in the shooting death of Jacqueline Dreiling. Kelly was found guilty and sentenced to up to 40 years in the Minnesota State Prison at Stillwater.
March 3, 1985	Josephine Kohl	Wallace Thompson	Wallace Thompson was charge with second degree manslaughter in the exposure (hypothermia) death of Josephine Kohl. Thompson pled guilty and was sentenced to serve up to two years in the Minnesota Correctional Facility in Stillwater, MN. Thompson died by drowning while fishing in May 1987.
July 17, 1993	Brooke Piekarski	Unidentified 15-year-old female	A 15-year-old female juvenile was charged with first degree manslaughter in the death of 1-year-old Brooke Piekarski. The juvenile was ordered to remain under the jurisdiction of the court until age 19.

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November 1, 1994	Bradley Scott Tweeter	David Marshall Pingeon	David Pingeon was charged with two counts of murder in the second degree, two counts of attempted murder in the second degree, and two counts of assault in the second degree for the shooting death of Bradley Tweeter and the wounding of his wife, Lynn Pingeon. More research is needed to determine the outcome.
March 13, 1996	Lawrence Johnson (aka Ernest Mann)	Eli Johnson	Lawrence Johnson was murdered by his grandson Eli, who then shot himself.
April 1, 1996	David Richard Lesinski	Donald Lesinski	Donald Lesinski shot brother David Lesinski and then shot himself.
May 20, 1996	Tabitha Lila Opsal-Juetten	Robert Reinhard Juetten	Robert Juetten held his wife Tabitha hostage, along with Robert Eugene Selbitschka and a 16-month-old child. Selbitschka and the child were released, although Selbitschka had been stabbed by Robert Juetten. Juetten stabbed Tabitha before officers forcibly entered to remove her and arrest Juetten. Tabitha later died at the hospital. Juetten was charged with one count of second degree murder, one count of second degree murder of an unborn child, one count of second degree attempted murder, one count of first degree criminal sexual conduct, two counts of kidnapping and two counts of first degree assault. He originally pled not guilty to all charges, then later pled guilty to several charges. He was sentenced to life in prison for the murder of Tabitha and her unborn child.

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January 8, 2007	Roger Wojciechowski, Jeanne Wojciechowski	Erik Wojciechowski	Erik Wojciechowski was originally charged with two counts of second degree murder in the shooting deaths of his parents, Roger and Jeanne, after calling the Morrison County Sheriff's office and admitting he had killed them. A grand jury later charged him with three counts of first degree murder and four counts of second degree murder in the deaths of his parents. Erik pled guilty to two counts of first degree murder and was sentenced to life in prison and ordered to pay \$11,078 in restitution.
April 29, 2007	Lewis James Wilczek	Jeremy Jason Hull, Casey Jo Oldenburg	Lewis Wilczek was reported missing by the Little Falls Police Department on May 1, 2007. He was last seen by family on April 29, 2007. His remains were found May 5, 2007, in Mille Lacs County. Jeremy Hull was charged with three counts of second degree murder in Wilczek's death. He was found guilty of premeditated murder in the first degree. The jury also found Hull guilty of first degree murder with intent while committing aggravated robbery. He was sentenced to life in prison without parole. Casey Jo Oldenburg was charged with aiding an offender as an accomplice after the fact and obstructing the investigation. She pled guilty to the charges and was sentenced to 86 months in prison. Both made unsuccessful appeals related to their sentences.
January 25, 2008	Cody Michael Waytashek	Michael Fautsch	Cody Watashek died in what appeared to be an accidental shooting on January 25, 2008. After an investigation, Michael Fautsch was charged with a misdemeanor in Waytashek's death. He pled guilty to the misdemeanor charges and was sentenced to served 45 days in jail for pointing what he thought was an unloaded gun at Waytashek.

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March 2008	Dylan Martin	Roger Eugene O'Jala	Robert O'Jala was charged with one count of murder in the second degree - unintentional and one count of manslaughter in the first degree in the death of 2 1/2 year old Dylan Martin. Outcome unknown.
February 12, 2011	Jason Duane Ramsdell	Patricia Ann Taylor	Patricia Taylor was charged with third degree murder for selling a prescription drug to James Ramsdell, who died of a lethal dose of the drug the day it was sold to him. Taylor pled guilty to the charge and was sentenced to 74 months in prison.
October 3, 2011	Dustin Joseph Brown	Jason Ray Dominguez	Jason Dominguez was charged with two counts of second degree intentional murder in the shooting death of Dustin Brown. A grand jury later indicted Dominguez on the following charges: Count I - Murder in the First Degree (premeditation); Count II - Murder in the First Degree (while committing burglary); Count III - Murder in the First Degree (while committing arson); Count IV - Murder in the First Degree (while committing aggravated robbery); Count V - Murder in the Second Degree (intentional); Count VI - Murder in the Second Degree (while committing assault in the second degree) and Count VII - Felon in Possession of a Pistol. A jury found Dominguez guilty of all charges. He was sentenced to life in prison for the first count of First Degree Premeditated Murder and 60 months in prison for seventh count of a felon in possession of a pistol.

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February 28, 2012	Miranda Ann Gosiak	Keon Malone "Bird" Mangun, Tanya Asbhy, Brandon Bedford, Christian Dahn	Keon Mangun was charged with third degree murder in the heroin overdose death of Miranda Gosiak. A jury found him guilty. He was sentenced o 11 years, 2 months in prison. Tanya Ashby was charged with aiding & abetting murder in the third degree, controlled substance crime in the third degree, and operating a disorderly house. Brandon Bedford & Christian Dahn were charged with aiding & abetting murder in the third degree and three controlled substance crimes in the third degree. Brandon Bedford was found not guilty of murder, but guilty of third degree sale of a controlled substance. Charges against Christian Dahn were dismissed. The outcome of charges against Tanya Ashby are unknown as of 11/20/2014.
June 2, 2012	Leslie Ellyn Peterson	Warren John Okerman	Warren Okerman was charged with third degree murder in the methamphetamine overdose death of Leslie Peterson. Outcome of the case is pending.
November 22, 2012	Nicholas Alexander Brady Schaeffel, Haile Elaine Kifer	Byron David Smith	Byron Smith was charged with two counts of Second Degree Murder in the shooting deaths of Nicholas Brady and Haile Kifer after they allegedly broke into his home. Smith was later indicted on first-degree murder in the deaths of Brady and Kifer. A jury found Smith guilty of first degree premeditated murder. He was sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole. Smith filed an appeal on the conviction in May/June 2014.
February 23, 2013	Cynthia Lakeman	Richard Lakeman	Murder suicide. According the Morrison County Sheriff's Department, Richard Lakeman shot his wife Cynthia and then shot himself.