

The 2005 Minnesota Femicide Report

We remember our mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, daughters, sons, wives, husbands, partners, family members, friends, co-workers, neighbors and fellow Minnesotans lost to the terrible toll of domestic violence and child abuse...

Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women



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About the Femicide Report

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women monitors information about women and children murdered in our state to educate the public about the lethality of violence against women and child abuse. We pledge to remember the women, children, and family members and/or friends who die each year from domestic violence, and also the women and children who are murdered while being used in prostitution and sex trafficking. Women and children used in prostitution and sex trafficking are battered women and abused children in need of protection from abuse. We also remember the women and children who were murdered by friends, acquaintances, strangers, or unknown perpetrators.

We challenge communities to respond to battered women and their children by providing adequate funding for safe shelter and advocacy services, prevention education for all elementary and secondary students, laws to protect women and children, effective enforcement of those laws, and aggressive prosecution of all domestic assault crimes and all prostitution crimes targeting perpetrators, pimps, and "johns."

In reporting the total number of deaths, it is important to note that *at least* this many women and children have been murdered. We cannot be certain we have not missed some deaths since we must use a method of data collection that primarily relies on news accounts. No state or federal agency collects comprehensive data on domestic homicides. In addition, the murders of women of color, Native American women, women living in poverty, rural women, lesbian/bisexual/transgender women, and women and girls used in prostitution and sex trafficking may be under-reported in our listing as they frequently go unreported in mainstream media.

The 2005 Femicide Report is compiled from news accounts. Please contact MCBW if we have missed a death or if you have updated or more complete information on any femicide.

We ask that the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women be credited when information from this report is used.

Women and Children Murdered in Minnesota: 1988-2004

1988	<u>At least 18 women</u> died from domestic violence*	1998	<u>At least 22 women</u> died from domestic violence <u>At least 15 children</u> died from child abuse
1989	<u>At least 18 women</u> died from domestic violence	1999	<u>At least 22 women</u> died from domestic abuse <u>At least 20 children</u> died from child abuse
1990	<u>At least 26 women</u> died from domestic violence	2000	<u>At least 40 women</u> died from domestic violence <u>At least 6 children</u> died from child abuse <u>At least 1 family member</u> was murdered
1991	<u>At least 12 women</u> died from domestic violence	2001	<u>At least 33 women</u> died from domestic violence <u>At least 12 children</u> died from child abuse <u>At least 6 family members/friends</u> were murdered
1992	<u>At least 31 women</u> died from domestic violence <u>At least 8 children</u> died from child abuse** <u>At least 3 women</u> were murdered while being used in prostitution*** <u>At least 2 family members/friends</u> were murdered by a women's current or former partner	2002	<u>At least 16 women</u> died from domestic violence <u>At least 13 children</u> died from child abuse
1993	<u>At least 28 women</u> died from domestic violence <u>At least 13 children</u> died from child abuse <u>At least 6 women</u> were murdered while being used in prostitution <u>At least 5 family members/friends</u> were murdered	2003	<u>At least 14 women</u> died from domestic violence. <u>At least 10 children</u> died from child abuse.
1994	<u>At least 19 women</u> died from domestic violence <u>At least 7 children</u> died from child abuse <u>At least 2 women</u> were murdered while being used in prostitution	2004	<u>At least 13 women</u> died from domestic violence. <u>At least 11 children</u> died from child abuse. <u>At least 3 family members/friends</u> were murdered
1995	<u>At least 29 women</u> died from domestic violence <u>At least 11 children</u> died from child abuse		
1996	<u>At least 22 women</u> died from domestic violence <u>At least 17 children</u> died from child abuse <u>At least 6 women</u> were murdered while being used in prostitution		
1997	<u>At least 17 women</u> died from domestic violence <u>At least 5 children</u> died from child abuse		

*Cases of women murdered where the suspected, alleged or convicted perpetrator was a current or former husband, boyfriend, intimate partner, household or family member.

**Cases of children murdered where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was the father, mother, guardian, babysitter, child care provider, or household/family member of the child; or the perpetrator was the parent's spouse or intimate partner.

***MCBW recognizes prostitution as a system of violence against women and children.

In Minnesota in 2005:

At least 17 women were murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a current or former husband, boyfriend, or intimate partner of the deceased woman.

At least 9 women were murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a family member or a household member of the deceased woman.

At least 4 children under the age of 18 were murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was the father, mother, guardian, babysitter, child care provider, or household/family member of the child, or the perpetrator was the parent's spouse or intimate partner.

At least 2 friends or family members were murdered in domestic violence-related situations.

At least 7 women or children were murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was an acquaintance of the deceased woman or child, or was a stranger or an unknown assailant.

9 men, women and children were murdered in the Red Lake school shootings on March 21, 2005.

At least 18 children have been left motherless by the murders of their mothers.

Women murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a current or former husband, boyfriend, or intimate partner.

Tina Gerving, 39

Erskine

January 23, 2005

Polk County sheriff's deputies found Tina's body, along with the body of her boyfriend, David DeFrang, 44, inside their home after being asked to conduct a general welfare check there. It was determined that David murdered Tina and then committed suicide. Tina worked as an accountant and also taught Sunday school at Grace Lutheran Church. She left behind 4 daughters. Tina enjoyed exercising, fishing, reading, and tending to her flower gardens.

Cassandra Koochek, 42

St. Paul

February 15, 2005

Clarence Dunn St., 50, pleaded guilty to beating to death his girlfriend, Cassandra, with a hammer. Dunn made a 911 call from Koochek's apartment. When police arrived, they found her lying on a bed with a blanket, pillow, and a plastic bag over her head. She had been struck on the head at least 5 times. Dunn was taken to Regions Hospital, where he was treated for self-inflicted cuts to his wrist. He pleaded guilty to Cassandra's murder after a psychiatric exam found him competent to stand trial. Dunn was sentenced to 25½ years in prison. In 1995, Dunn pleaded guilty to second-degree assault for stabbing another woman in the throat and was sentenced to four years and four months in prison. Cassandra left behind a teenaged son.

Moonku "Marissa" Persaud, 40

Eagan

February 18, 2005

Police found Marissa strangled to death in the upstairs bedroom of her Eagan home. She hadn't shown up for her job at Blue Cross/Blue Shield for days. Friends and family were concerned about her safety and called law enforcement. Marissa's former live-in boyfriend, Jairam Ganpat, 37, was arrested in Brownsville, Texas, trying to re-enter the United States from Mexico. He was charged with two counts of second-degree murder after being extradited to Minnesota. "Growing up I never had a father figure in my life and my mother was both my mother and father," said Marissa's 17-year-old daughter, Vanessa. A good friend of Marissa's described Ganpat as an obsessive boyfriend who prevented her from socializing with her friends. "He was very, very controlling," said Whanyia Lankah. Eagan police had responded to a suspected case of domestic abuse at Marissa's home on January 23rd. Police gave her information on how to obtain an order for protection against Ganpat. Ganpat was sentenced to life in prison for Marissa's murder.

Jessica Rose, 18

Duluth

March 5, 2005

Jeremy Steenblock, 29, was charged with second-degree murder in the death of his fiancée, Jessica Rose, 18. Police found Jessica dead in the apartment she shared with Steenblock. The medical examiner later ruled her death due to strangulation. Steenblock had called 911 to say that his fiancée had fallen and hit her head in the shower. However, when police interviewed him later, Steenblock admitted to strangling Jessica. Lori Sommer, Jessica's aunt, said, "She didn't have much but she would give you the shirt off her back." Sommer also stated that she knew Steenblock was abusing her niece and tried to get Jessica to leave him. Jeremy Steenblock had been arrested 3 times for domestic abuse in 4 years. In January of 2004, a hearing was held to revoke his probation for assaulting another girlfriend, but the judge ruled that Steenblock remain on probation. Steenblock pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced to 30 years.

Mai Yia Lee, 22**Minneapolis****March 26, 2005**

Mai Yia Lee was fatally stabbed by her fiancée, Vou Xiong, 27, after she told him she wouldn't marry him. Lee and Xiong had their marriage arranged in a Thailand refugee camp, but when Xiong tested positive for Hepatitis B, Lee's family no longer wanted her to marry him. Xiong arrived at the home Lee shared with relatives, knocked on the door, and told her he had photos to show her. Across the hall, Lee's uncle heard screaming and ran in. Xiong was standing over Mai Yia with a knife in his hand. He lashed out at the uncle and then went downstairs and found Lee's two female relatives. The uncle came to help and was stabbed in the chest, but managed to overpower Xiong and tie him up until police arrived. Mai Yia died of multiple stab wounds. Vou Xiong was charged with one count of second-degree intentional murder and one count of second-degree assault in the stabbing of Mai Yia Lee's uncle. Mai Yia was described as a "conservative, honest, and really good student who came to school every day," by staff of the Hmong Mutual Assistance Association, where she studied ESL and job skills.

Patricia McGhee, 31**Burnsville****May 14, 2005**

Johnny Clark, 34, turned himself in at the Hennepin County jail, stating, "Arrest me, I hurt my baby." Burnsville police found Patricia McGhee, 31, bleeding in the bathroom of her home from gunshot wounds to the head and chest. She died at the scene. Patricia had been with Johnny since she was 14, and the couple had 3 children, ages 13 to 15. Kelly McGhee, Patricia's sister, said she was trying to end her relationship with Clark and that she'd moved out briefly after police responded to a domestic call. She had also changed the locks because she was afraid of him. "She said, 'I broke away. I feel good to be free.' Those were her last words before she died," said her mother, Shaday Ombasa. Patricia's eldest child said she will remember her mother's energy and cheerfulness, "Even in a sad situation, she'd always have a joke or something to laugh about." Patricia worked as a nurse for 10 years at Abbott Northwestern Hospital in Minneapolis. Clark was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison.

Tammy Hughes, 30**Albert Lea****May 27, 2005**

After a neighbor called police about hearing a popping sound coming from the home Robert and Tammy Hughes had once shared, police found Tammy, 30, dead on the living room floor from two gunshot wounds to the chest. Robert, 34, was found crying in a fire ring in the backyard. He had a liquid propane torch and a gasoline can with him. He was ordered to the ground and arrested. Later, he stated to police, "I screwed up." On her lunch hour, Tammy had returned to the home she until recently, had shared with her husband to resolve some things with him, said a co-worker. Tammy's cousin stated that the couple was "having problems" and that Tammy had left Robert. One of Tammy's co-workers said that Robert had held Tammy captive in their home for as long as three days the week before the murder. Police were called, but Robert was not arrested. "She recently tried to get away from [her husband]," the co-worker said. Relatives, friends, and co-workers described Robert as very controlling. Tammy was remembered as a dedicated, loving mother to her two children, ages 4 and 5, as well as a Girl Scout troop leader, and a friend who frequently helped out an elderly neighbor without being asked. She had worked as an assistant at American Express Financial Advisors for 6 months before her murder. Robert Hughes was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison.

Tiffany Bowes, 22**St. Paul****June 11, 2005**

Tiffany Bowes was scared to go back to the apartment of Michael McGuire, 21, her abusive ex-boyfriend, to pick up some of her belongings. She told her friends to call the police if she didn't return quickly. When those friends couldn't reach her half an hour later, they called St. Paul police. Tiffany and Michael were found dead inside the apartment. According to police, McGuire shot Tiffany several times and then shot himself. "Tiff was real wonderful," said Steve Lundgren, who watched Bowes grow up while he was married to her mother. They have since divorced. "She was light and bubbly and full of fun and energy. A good kid. A beautiful smile and she treated everybody like they were golden."

Sherry Thompson, 15**Bloomington****June 23, 2005**

Daniel Otto, 17, admitted in court that he caused the death of his girlfriend, Sherry Thompson, when he gave her a lethal dose of methadone, a narcotic used to treat heroin addiction. According to court documents, Sherry and Daniel had drunk wine coolers and smoked marijuana at his home. Sherry had also snorted a Prozac tablet in an attempt to get high. Daniel broke into a lock-box where his mother kept large doses of methadone and gave it to Sherry. He watched her drink the methadone, throw up, and fall asleep in the basement. Sherry was found dead later of an overdose of methadone. Daniel Otto was charged with unintentional third-degree murder. He pleaded guilty and is expected to receive a juvenile sentence and a seven-year adult sentence, which will be stayed until he serves his juvenile sentence.

Angelina Garley, 27**Brooklyn Park****June 24, 2005**

Clemmie Tucker, 33, was charged with second-degree murder in the death of his girlfriend, Angelina Garley, 27. Angelina was found in a car in Brooklyn Park with a gunshot wound to her chest. Garley's 12-year-old son told police that Tucker spent the day on June 23rd with him and his mother at a water park and that she had planned to meet Tucker later that night. Police found Angelina shot to death at 2:44 a.m. the following morning after a call about a car horn honking and the sound of someone screaming for help. Tucker pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced to 12 years in prison.

Susan Keezer, 47**Bagley****July 22, 2005**

Kathy Rabideau, 47, was charged with two counts of second-degree murder and a single count of third-degree murder in the death of her intimate partner, Susan Keezer. At 6:43 a.m. on July 22nd, local law enforcement received a phone call from a woman requesting a welfare check on Susan. When an officer arrived at the home Rabideau and Keezer shared, he saw Rabideau run into the street, covered with blood and waving her arms. She allegedly said, "Wake up my wife! Wake her up!" She led the officer to the kitchen, where he found Susan lying facedown in a pool of blood. Stab wounds were seen in Susan's back and a bloody knife was found in the yard. A neighbor reported that she heard the two women arguing the evening of July 21 and the early morning hours of July 22. The criminal complaint stated that Rabideau and Keezer had been in a relationship for three or four years. Susan enjoyed crossword puzzles and walking. Rabideau was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to twenty years in prison.

Laurie Bird, 49**Champlin****August 2, 2005**

Laurie was found dead in her home, shot to death, after her husband called the police. Officers found Laurie dead on the bed and took her husband into custody after finding no signs of forced entry or foul play. Kurt Bird, 52, was charged with 2 counts of first-degree murder and one count of second-degree murder. Family and friends stated the couple had been married about 8 years and were having problems. Laurie died of a single gunshot wound to the head. Kurt Bird claimed the shooting was accidental. Laurie was the mother of 3 daughters and grandmother to 3. Kurt Bird was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison.

Beverly Benson, 72**Bloomington****August 3, 2005**

In the early hours of August 3rd, George Benson, 73, called police to inform them he'd just taken his wife's life and was about to commit suicide. Police arrived at the Bensons' home to find both Beverly, 72, and her husband dead. He had shot his wife and then himself. Beverly was very ill with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, better known as ALS or Lou Gehrig's disease, and could no longer talk, walk, or even turn over in bed. George Benson was Beverly's 24-hour nurse, but he had developed health problems of his own. Police are still investigating the details of the case and whether or not Beverly consented to die. Before she became ill, Beverly loved to square dance, travel, bowl, and garden.

Roman Kidane, 25**St. Louis Park****August 25, 2005**

Kirill Geilman, 55, was charged with second-degree intentional murder in the death of his girlfriend, Roman Kidane, 25. He had called 911 at about 7:45 a.m. and stated, "I killed my girlfriend just now." Roman bled to death from several large wounds in her neck. She also had defensive wounds on her hands and stab wounds to the back of her head, stated the criminal complaint. Offices said Geilman told them he "punched" Kidane in the neck "lots of times," and he knew he killed her. "This young woman died violently, and she died horrifically," said St. Louis Park Police Chief John Luse. "The crime scene suggests an angry act of passion, loss of control and violent rage." Geilman is serving 20 years for Roman's murder.

Sheila Hollie, 43**Minneapolis****October 14, 2005**

Sheila Hollie, 43, lay dying in her bedroom as her longtime boyfriend aimed a handgun at her adult daughter. Brandon Johnson, 34, shot and wounded the daughter once from across the hall, then again as he walked into the bedroom. Also in that room was Sheila's niece, holding the infant son of Hollie's daughter. When the boyfriend pointed the gun at the baby, the niece rolled over, protecting the boy as she was shot in her chest and her arm. Johnson was arrested and charged with one count of first-degree murder and three counts of attempted first-degree murder. Sheila died of a gunshot wound to her chest. Her daughter and niece were hospitalized, although they survived their injuries. Hollie, a choir member at New Salem Baptist Church, had been Johnson's girlfriend for about five years. Minneapolis police stated that Johnson had been arrested in 1999 on suspicion of terroristic threats, stemming from an incident with Hollie.

Crystal Halloran Drummer, 23**Plymouth****October 18, 2005**

Crystal was found dead by police after a neighbor in her apartment building called 911 at 3:30 a.m. after hearing shouting in the hallway. Crystal's husband, Bernard Obondo, 26, also called police, saying there was a problem in the apartment. When police arrived, they arrested Obondo after finding blood in the hall and Crystal dead inside. Bernard Obondo was charged with intentional murder for allegedly stabbing, strangling, and beating his wife to death. Police recovered a bloody knife and hammer. The couple had married in February 2005. Obondo pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced to more than 37 years in prison. "This was a vicious crime, an example of out-of-control domestic abuse that resulted in the death of a young woman," said County Attorney Amy Klobuchar. "Jealousy and anger turned to violence and then ended in murder."

Linda Klyve, 47**Rolling Forks Township****December 18, 2005**

Pope County Sheriff Tom Larsen found Linda Klyve, 47, dead from a gunshot wound in her home. Gary Wroblewski, 46, her ex-boyfriend, was later found dead in a wooded area near Benson, Minnesota, from a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Larson said Klyve was killed early Sunday. He said Wroblewski then called a relative, and the information was eventually relayed to law enforcement in the Twin Cities and then to authorities in Pope and Swift counties. Linda worked as a nurse at Swift County-Benson Hospital and had two grown children from a previous marriage. She enjoyed shopping and spending time at her lake cabin. Linda and Gary had been in a relationship for about 4 years, but she had recently ended broken it off.

Women murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was a family member or a household member.

Bonita Thoms, 58

Ross Lake Township

February 26, 2005

More than nine months after Bonita Thoms' body was found submerged in a bathtub at her home, a 35-year-old man, David Tscheu, was arrested for her murder. Thoms was Tscheu's step-aunt. Police were called to Bonita's home after a relative found her body in the bathtub. An autopsy ruled her death a homicide, concluding that someone had intentionally held her head underwater until she drowned. It was also determined that Thoms was sexually assaulted. DNA material taken from her body was matched to Tscheu's DNA. Investigators learned that Tscheu had been working near Bonita's house on February 25 and that he told his girlfriend about her death before a public announcement had been made. David Tscheu's criminal history includes convictions for misdemeanor fifth-degree assault, felony third-degree assault causing substantial bodily harm, and felony terroristic threats—for which he served 24 months in prison. Crow Wing County Sheriff Eric Klang said Tscheu had assaulted girlfriends and law enforcement officers in the past. "We've had a lot of past history with him." Tscheu was convicted of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison without the possibility of parole.

Diane Hedalen, 50

Burnsville

March 18, 2005

Derrek Hopkins, 24, was charged with second-degree murder in the stabbing death of his aunt, Diane Hedalen, 50. Police found Hopkins wandering in the street and mumbling about Osama Bin Laden. He was taken to the hospital. Burnsville police then went to the apartment where Hopkins had been staying with his aunt and found her lying facedown on the bedroom floor. Officers found 2 knives on the floor next to Diane's body and blood around her shoulder and neck area. An autopsy determined that she died as a result of her throat being cut. She also had several broken ribs, a broken wrist, and evidence of having been strangled. Hopkins told authorities that he had been using methamphetamines daily for about a week prior to the murder and that he had gotten into an argument with his aunt. He confessed to murdering her and pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in January 2006. Hopkins was sentenced to 17 years in prison.

Hazel Boswell, 70

Bemidji

June 5, 2005

Ronald Kettle, 45, was arrested after he appeared at the Beltrami County Sheriff's Department and allegedly confessed to murdering his 70-year-old mother, Hazel Boswell. Witnesses stated he was under the influence of drugs at the time. Police officers went to Hazel's home, where they found her body lying in a hallway and covered with a blanket. Officers reported a large amount of blood in the home. Kettle told police officers that he had been taking drugs and that he woke up next to his mother's body. He further said that he believed he'd killed his mother with a kitchen knife and then cut himself in an attempt to take his own life. The preliminary autopsy report found that Hazel died of multiple blunt force trauma to the face and head. Ronald Kettle pleaded guilty to second-degree murder.

Brenda Kirksey, 50**St. Paul****June 26, 2005**

A 23-year-old St. Paul man and his girlfriend crushed his mother's skull repeatedly with a hammer after an argument, then left her dying in her apartment as they walked to a nearby park and drank beer until dawn, according to criminal allegations filed against the pair. Michael Sevier and Tina Kiefer, 24, hid the hammer and their bloody clothes in a garbage can. They later returned to the apartment and called 911 to report that Brenda had apparently been shot in the head by an intruder. In later interviews with police, the couple accused each other of hitting Kirksey in the head with a hammer. Sevier and Kiefer were charged with second-degree murder in Brenda's death. They had been living with Brenda for about a month and neighbors reported hearing frequent arguments. Police found an audiotape inside the residence with Sevier speaking of his violent hatred for his mother. Last fall, Brenda sought an order for protection against her son, saying he had threatened her life, punched her, and knocked out her front teeth. "He is a monster," said LaShondra Exom, Sevier's older sister. "He had no right to take our mother from us." Brenda's neighbor Charlene Lang remembered her as the kind of grandmotherly neighbor children read about in storybooks. "Miss Brenda," as she was known to Lang's grandchildren, used seed packets to teach Lang's grandson to count. Brenda was an avid gardener. Tina Kiefer pleaded guilty to a lesser charge in exchange for testifying against Sevier. However, this proved unnecessary when Sevier pleaded guilty to second-degree murder. He was sentenced to nearly 27 years in prison.

Patricia Niedere, 52**Hastings****October 8, 2005**

Disbelief and sadness over the murders of a Hastings couple deepened as news spread that the couple's son and two high school classmates had been arrested in a connection with the crimes. Patricia and Peter Niedere, both 52, were shot to death in their family's auto glass shop. Within hours, police had arrested the couple's son Matthew Niedere, and Clayton Keister, both 17 and seniors at Concordia Academy in Roseville. The Niederees were shot around 1:50 p.m. and witnesses saw two people run from the store after the shooting and drive away in a Pontiac Grand Am. Tracking tips from the boys' friends, police arrested the teens in Blaine, where Keister lives. The couple's other son, Dan Niedere, spoke about his parents, "My parents were real loving parents. They always wanted the best for you. If you were in a pinch, they would drop everything to be with you." Peter was a leisure pilot and former telephone company worker who loved to work in his yard. In addition to the auto glass shop, Patricia owned a shoe store. She was an avid golfer and a car buff. Matthew Niedere and Clayton Keister were both charged with first-degree murder, second-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder. A third teen, Jamie Patton, 18, was charged with two counts of conspiracy to commit first-degree murder for allegedly helping to plan the murders. Niedere and Keister later both pleaded guilty to two counts of first-degree murder each and were both sentenced to life in prison. They will not be eligible for parole for 30 years. Patton pleaded guilty to conspiracy to commit first-degree murder and was sentenced to 12 years in prison.

Marilyn Shutter, 55**Bemidji****November 24, 2005**

Police received a call on the evening of Thanksgiving from Theodore Shutter, reporting that his wife, Marilyn, had been shot with a deer rifle. She was taken to the hospital, where she was pronounced dead. The 15-year-old grandson of the couple, whose name has not been released because he is a juvenile, was taken into custody and charged with second-degree intentional murder. Theodore Shutter reported that after the shooting, he took the gun away from his grandson and held him until police arrived. The Shutters had adopted their grandson when he was a baby and were raising him as their son. The grandson told authorities that he thought about shooting both grandparents. In February 2006, the grandson was ruled incompetent to stand trial and was committed to a psychiatric hospital. The goal is to restore his mental health so that he may stand trial. "She was just totally my best friend and a tremendous gal," said Ted Shutter. "She was just my life. [We were married] thirty-seven years November 21st." Marilyn worked as an assistant manager at Bemidji Medical Equipment. She was very much involved with the Beltrami County Fair Board and 4-H. "She loved her community and she loved what she did," said Carla Mandrell, a fellow Fair Board member. "Everything she touched exuded her enthusiasm for what she did, and that was contagious."

Marie Wielenberg, 77**Melrose Township****December 10, 2005**

Preliminary autopsy results confirmed that three deaths at a Melrose Township farm were a double murder-suicide, said Stearns County Sheriff John Sanner. It was determined that Patrick Wielenberg, 43, shot his parents to death. One of the Wielenberg's other sons found his parents, Marie, 77 and Joseph, 82, dead in their bed and his brother, dead from a self-inflicted gunshot wound, in another room. "Everyone is shocked, truly shocked," Sanner said. "Patrick is the only person who truly knows why this happened, leaving surviving family members and law enforcement to try to piece together all the factors that could possibly contribute to a tragedy like this." Marie enjoyed gardening, scrapbooking, quilting, baking, and spending time with her 24 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

Lea Klande, 69**St. Paul****December 12, 2005**

Police arrested Laverne Klande, 45, in connection with the shooting death of his mother, Lea Klande, 69. Lea was found in her apartment by the manager of the building. One of Laverne's sons had called the manager and said his father "was off the wagon and may have done something stupid." Police apprehended Laverne a day after the shooting. He was carrying a gun when arrested. A bullet in the gun matched a shell casing found at the apartment. An autopsy revealed Lea had been shot in the chest and the back of the head. Lea had been sharing her apartment with her son for several months following his seventh drunken-driving charge. Relatives reported that Laverne was upset that his mother had retrieved his truck, impounded after the DWI arrest, and was storing it at his son's house. Laverne Klande was charged with second-degree murder. In July of 2006, he was convicted and sentenced to 25½ years in prison.

Maris Miles, 68

Burnsville

December 30, 2005

Hours after being turned away from mental health treatment at an Edina Hospital, Stephen Miles, 23, allegedly struck his stepmother, Maris, on the head with a hatchet and then decapitated her. After Stephen told his father, Roland Miles, what he had done, Roland went inside, found his wife's body, and called 911. When police arrived, they found blood in the house and Stephen and Roland Miles in the backyard. Stephen Miles lived with his grandmother and mother in Eagan. He had a history of mental illness and recently told his parents he heard voices coming from the family rug. He fashioned a mixing bowl into a helmet to block out harassing radio messages from the government. The day before Maris' murder, when Roland Miles tried to stop his son from using a fork and hammer to remove the transmitter supposedly embedded in his teeth, Stephen grabbed his father by the neck and attempted to strangle him. The next day, his parents took him to Fairview-Southdale Hospital, where an emergency room physician said there were no beds available and referred the family to another hospital. After his father was unable to convince Stephen to go to another hospital, he was taken to his father's home to play chess. Stephen Miles was charged with second-degree murder and was held without bail pending a psychiatric exam to determine his mental fitness to stand trial. Maris had been a teacher in Faribault. She had retired but returned to education three years ago when hired by an area junior high as an educational assistant to developmentally disabled students. "She was a sweet, kind woman...she loved being around kids and working with kids and helping kids out," stated a co-worker. Maris was also a volunteer for Burnsville's senior citizen organization and the Minnesota Zoo. In 2006, the court determined that Stephen Miles was found incompetent to stand trial due to mental illness. He was ordered to remain in a state mental hospital with a review of his case every six months.

Children murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was the father, mother, guardian, babysitter, childcare provider or household/family member of the child, or the perpetrator was the parent's spouse or intimate partner.

MaKiah Greeninger, 3

St. Paul

January 8, 2005

Paramedics were called to a St. Paul apartment on January 5th, where they found 3-year-old MaKiah unconscious. MaKiah was taken to the hospital, where she died three days later of head injuries. The boyfriend of MaKiah's mother, Mario Mitchell, 24, told police that he dropped the girl when she urinated on him while he babysat her. Doctors who treated the girl said Mitchell's report was inconsistent with "extensive and severe" injuries. "The simplest way to describe the medical evidence at this point was the child was beaten to death. No child should have to die that way," said Susan Gaertner, Ramsey County Attorney. Mitchell was charged with second-degree murder and first-degree manslaughter. In 2006 he pled guilty to manslaughter and sentenced to nearly 7 years in prison.

Dakota Forss, 17 months

St. Paul

April 12, 2005

Joseph Bell, 34, was charged with second-degree murder after admitting to police that he repeatedly abused his girlfriend's son, Dakota Forss, 17 months. Bell told police he knew he would eventually kill the boy, but "just couldn't stop." The little boy had suffered more than 50 injuries in his lifetime, including blows and punches to the head that caused a skull fracture, cigarette burns, blackened eyes, internal bleeding, and injuries to his groin. Large patches of hair had been pulled out and Dakota had suffered a blow to his back so violent it bruised his lungs, the medical examiner determined. "You almost have to believe a day didn't go by where this child wasn't being struck or hurt," said Ramsey County Attorney Susan Gaertner. The toddler's mother, Kalani Forss, told police that she and Bell had lived together since November 2004, and that she had first witnessed Bell abuse her son in January. Bell pleaded guilty to second-degree intentional murder and was sentenced to 25½ years. Kalani Forss later pleaded guilty to felony neglect.

Caleila Lee, 5 months

Roseville

April 15, 2005

Roseville police were called to an apartment at 11 p.m. to respond to a report of a child not breathing. Caleila Lee, 5 months, was rushed to a hospital, where she died an hour later of abdominal bleeding and head injuries. Police arrested Caleila's father, Corey Lee, 25, after he gave inconsistent statements. He and Caleila's mother told police they found the baby unresponsive in her crib, attempted to resuscitate her and then called police. Eventually he told investigators he caused the baby's injuries because he was upset that she was crying. Lee was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 12 years in prison.

Ryane Pearson, 10 months

Bemidji

July 31, 2005

Police officers were called to downtown Bemidji on a report that a baby wasn't breathing. CPR was being performed when officers arrived, but Ryane Pearson, 10 months, was pronounced dead at North Country Hospital. An autopsy found he died of blunt force injuries. Ryane's death was ruled a homicide, but no charges have been filed at this date.

**Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women
2005 Femicide Report**

Friends or family members murdered in domestic violence-related situations.

Peter Niedere, 52

Hastings

October 8, 2005

Disbelief and sadness over the weekend murders of a Hastings couple deepened as news spread that the couple's son and a high school classmate had been arrested in a connection with the crimes. Patricia and Peter Niedere, both 52, were shot to death in their family's auto glass shop. Within hours, police had arrested the couple's adopted son Matthew Niedere, and Clayton Keister, both 17 and seniors at Concordia Academy in Roseville. The Niederees were shot around 1:50 p.m. and witnesses saw two people run from the store after the shooting and drive away in a Pontiac Grand Am. Tracking tips from the boys' friends, police arrested the teens in Blaine, where Keister lives. The couple's other son, Dan Niedere, spoke about his parents, "My parents were real loving parents. They always wanted the best for you. If you were in a pinch, they would drop everything to be with you." Matthew Niedere has been described as a shy and religious athlete. Peter was a leisure pilot and former telephone company worker who loved to work in his yard. In addition to the auto glass shop, Patricia owned a shoe store. She was an avid golfer and a car buff. Matthew Niedere and Clayton Keister both were charged with first-degree murder, second-degree murder and conspiracy to commit murder. A third teen, Jamie Patton, 18, was charged with two counts of conspiracy to commit first-degree murder for allegedly helping to plan the murders.

Joseph Wielenberg, 82

Melrose Township

December 10, 2005

Preliminary autopsy results confirmed that three deaths at a Melrose Township farm were a double murder-suicide, said Stearns County Sheriff John Sanner. It was determined that Patrick Wielenberg, 43, shot his parents to death. One of the Wielenberg's other sons found his parents, Marie, 77 and Joseph, 82, dead in their bed and his brother, dead from a self-inflicted gunshot wound, in another room. "Everyone is shocked, truly shocked," Sanner said. "Patrick is the only person who truly knows why this happened, leaving surviving family members and law enforcement to try to piece together all the factors that could possibly contribute to a tragedy like this." Joseph was a beekeeper and enjoyed reading books, the outdoors, and spending time with his 24 grandchildren and 4 great-grandchildren.

Women and children murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was an acquaintance of the deceased woman or child, or was a stranger or an unknown assailant.

Pa Houa Yang, 13

Minneapolis

January 14, 2005

Pa Houa's body was found inside a disabled van on a cold January day. She had been shot once in the head. The case remains unsolved and there are no suspects. "The pain still hurts so much," said Pa Houa's mother, Xai Hang. Investigators are frustrated. "[He] shoots her and leaves her in the van like a piece of garbage, and she freezes," said Lt. Lee Edwards of Minneapolis Police. "The last day of her life must have been terrifying for her, and we need to keep that in mind. She was just 13 years old." Pa Houa was an excellent student at Franklin Middle School, but she had begun skipping classes and hanging out with the wrong crowd.

Memory Pachowicz, 33

St. Paul

March 6, 2005

Memory Pachowicz crossed paths with her suspected killer only by chance. The man who authorities believe lured the 33-year old mother of two to a vacant apartment and murdered her, Nathaniel Glass, 26, was also charged with drawing another woman to the same apartment the month before and raping her. Glass was charged with two counts of second-degree murder in Memory's death. Memory was last seen at 1 a.m. the night of her murder, when a man told police he saw her in her car and saw a maroon car behind her. Memory told the man that "the vehicle behind her was with her and she was OK," said the criminal complaint. Pachowicz told the man she was going to follow the car to a place where she could buy marijuana. An autopsy determined that Memory died of multiple blunt force impacts to the head. She was the mother of two girls, ages 1 and 13, and was pregnant at the time of her death. Memory was studying to be a veterinary technician and was originally from South Dakota. Glass pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced to 35 years in prison.

Julie Ann Nayquonabe-Nickaboine, 35

Onamia

April 2, 2005

Danielle Boyd, 23, was charged with 14 counts, including 2 counts of second-degree murder, after she allegedly attacked two women with a knife, scissors and hit them with a car on the Mille Lacs Reservation. One of the women, Julie Ann Nayquonabe-Nickaboine, 35, was found dead in the middle of the street. An autopsy showed she had been stabbed in her left lung and had been run over by a car. The other woman was run over and sustained a head injury and was expected to survive. The criminal complaint stated that at 2:30 a.m. the three women got into an argument at a home. A witness said that Boyd got a knife and scissors and attacked the other two women and that she allegedly got into a car and struck the women from behind. In December 2005, Boyd pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced to more than 20 years in prison.

Evelyn Geng, 62**Minneapolis****August 13, 2005**

Evelyn Geng was run down by a car at a gas station after she tried to stop a man who stole \$50 and a bottle of Pepsi from her. Simone Stillday, 23, was arrested and charged with second-degree murder. From the passenger seat, Stillday ordered the woman driving the car to run down Evelyn Geng, 62, who was standing in front of the car demanding the return of her money. When the driver refused, Stillday got behind the wheel and ran over Geng in the parking lot. Stillday told police that she was drunk at the time and that she thought she'd "hit a curb," according to murder charges filed in Hennepin County District Court. With her son looking on, and despite frantic attempts by police officers and witnesses at the station, Geng died about 40 minutes later. Evelyn's family said she was energetic and young at heart. She was a widowed mother of three and enjoyed making candles, going to garage sales, and traveling all over the country to visit her friends. Simone Stillday was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 25 years in prison.

Sidney Mahkuk, 11**Minneapolis****Body found October 23, 2005**

The body of an 11-year-old girl was found on a Minneapolis sidewalk behind a funeral home. An autopsy determined that Sidney Mahkuk died of a cocaine overdose. "We are investigating this as if it were a homicide," said Minneapolis Police Chief William McManus. "An 11-year-old girl doesn't wind up dead of her own volition on a sidewalk..." Sidney had been missing from home for a few days before she was found dead. Sidney was the second youngest of seven children and she loved spelling and animals. She was described as a good-hearted girl whose knowledge of street life in her neighborhood made her seem older than her years. "My family is begging, begging on their knees for someone to come forward for my little sister," said Sugar Askenette, Sidney's older sister. "We deserve to know what happened to her. The hurt, the pain are too much not to know."

Tiara Martell-Dingmann, 23**St. Cloud****November 26, 2005**

Tiara was killed after a bullet went through the window of an apartment where she was attending a party. The host of the party told police that earlier in the evening, David Delk, 19, had gotten into an altercation with another party guest. He left the party and went to the home of a family member, where he gathered people to return to the party. Back at the party, another fight broke out between the guests and this group of people and continued outside. David Delk's brother, Antonio Delk, 24, pointed a handgun at the apartment and fired off at least 3 rounds. One shot went through the window and struck Tiara in the head. Antonio and David Delk were both charged with two counts of second-degree murder.

Lul Ibrahim, 35**Eden Prairie****December 12, 2005**

Keith Allen Bruce, 18, was charged with second-degree murder in connection with a car theft that turned into a fatal hit-and-run. According to the criminal complaint, Bruce had gotten into Lul's sister's car, which was parked but unoccupied, and started driving out of a mall parking lot. Lul and her sister, Hawa Hassan, ran after the car. Bruce backed up the car, striking Ibrahim, and then sped off. Lul Ibrahim died in the hospital four days later of massive head trauma. "This is a crime that shocks the entire community," said Hennepin County Attorney Amy Klobuchar. "Lul Ibrahim was a wife, a mother of two and a business owner. She had also worked at our Domestic Abuse Service Center serving as an advocate for victims of domestic violence. It's a terrible tragedy that her own life has now been taken by an act of random violence. We will aggressively prosecute this case." Bruce pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced to 7½ years in prison.

We also remember and honor the women, men and children murdered in the Red Lake shootings on March 21, 2005.

Derrick Brun, 28

Dewayne Lewis, 15

Chase Lussier, 15

Daryl Lussier, 58

Neva Rogers, 61

Chanelle Rosebear, 15

Michelle Sigana, 32

Alicia Spike, 14

Thurlene Stillday, 15

About the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women

The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women was founded in 1978 to serve as a unifying voice for battered women and to link battered women's programs in the state with the common purpose of ending domestic violence. MCBW is a statewide membership organization of local, regional, and statewide programs advocating on behalf of battered women and their children.

MCBW promotes social change—individual, institutional, and cultural. We work to end oppression based on gender, race, age, sexual orientation, class, and disability. The specific work of MCBW involves changing systems and institutions so that they can respond more effectively to the needs of battered women. MCBW works to empower organizations that serve victims of domestic abuse. MCBW provides widespread networking opportunities for organizations that serve battered women and is the statewide voice on behalf on battered women and provides leadership on a regional, statewide, and national level.

MCBW's activities include resources and referrals for individuals, legislative and public policy advocacy on a statewide and federal level, sponsoring training events for programs that serve battered women, coordinating statewide task force meetings, serving as an information clearinghouse, publishing a quarterly newsletter and web site, and producing community education materials.

Mission Statement:

The mission of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is to provide a voice for battered women and member programs; challenge systems and institutions so they respond more effectively to the needs of battered women and their children; promote social change; and support, educate, and connect member programs.

Vision Statement:

The vision of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women is to end violence against women and their children and to achieve social justice for all.

- January 8: *MaKiah Greeninger, 3, St. Paul, beaten to death by her father*
- January 23: *Tina Gerving, 39, Erskine, shot to death by her husband in a murder-suicide*
- February 15: *Cassandra Koochek, 42, St. Paul, beaten to death by her boyfriend*
- February 18: *Moonku "Marissa" Persaud, 40, Eagan, strangled to death by her ex-boyfriend*
- February 26: *Bonita Thoms, 58, Ross Lake Township, drowned by her step-nephew*
- March 15: *Jessica Rose, 18, Duluth, strangled to death by her fiancé*
- March 18: *Diane Hedalen, 50, Burnsville, stabbed to death by her nephew*
- March 26: *Mai Yia Lee, Minneapolis, stabbed to death by her fiancé*
- April 12: *Dakota Forss, 17 months, St. Paul, beaten to death by his mother's boyfriend*
- April 15: *Caleila Lee, 5 months, Roseville, beaten to death by her father*
- May 14: *Patricia McGhee, 31, Burnsville, shot to death by her boyfriend*
- May 27: *Tammy Hughes, 30, Albert Lea, shot to death by her husband*
- June 5: *Hazel Boswell, 70, Bemidji, beaten to death by her son*
- June 11: *Tiffany Bowes, 22, St. Paul, shot to death by her ex-boyfriend in a murder-suicide*
- June 23: *Sherry Thompson, 15, Bloomington, given fatal drug overdose by her boyfriend*
- June 24: *Angelina Garley, 27, Brooklyn Park, shot to death by her boyfriend*
- June 26: *Brenda Kirksey, 50, St. Paul, beaten to death by her son and his girlfriend*
- July 22: *Susan Keezer, 47, Bagley, stabbed to death by her girlfriend*
- July 31: *Ryane Pearson, 10 months, Bemidji, beaten to death by an undisclosed perpetrator—believed to be a domestic homicide*
- August 2: *Laurie Bird, 49, Champlin, shot to death by her husband*
- August 3: *Beverly Benson, 72, Bloomington, shot to death by her husband*
- August 25: *Roman Kidane, 25, St. Louis Park, stabbed to death by her boyfriend*
- October 8: *Patricia and Peter Niedere, both 52, Hastings, shot to death by their son*
- October 14: *Sheila Hollie, 43, Minneapolis, shot to death by her boyfriend*
- October 18: *Crystal Halloran Drummer, 23, Plymouth, stabbed, beaten and strangled to death by her husband*
- November 24: *Marilyn Shutter, 55, Bemidji, shot to death by her grandson*
- December 10: *Marie Wielenberg, 77, and Joseph Wielenberg, 82, Melrose Township, shot to death by their son in a double murder-suicide*
- December 12: *Lea Klande, 69, St. Paul, shot to death by her son*
- December 18: *Linda Klyve, Rolling Forks Township, shot to death by her ex-boyfriend in a murder-suicide*
- December 30: *Maris Miles, 68, Burnsville, decapitated by her stepson with an ax*

In 2005, 32 Minnesotans lost their lives as a result of domestic violence or child abuse. Remember their names...