

# Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women



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## 2002 Femicide Report Women and Children Murdered in Minnesota

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

*We challenge communities to respond to battered women and their children by providing 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". Included in this report are the names of the women and children who have died from woman abuse and child abuse in Minnesota since January 1, 2002.*

### **In Minnesota in 2002:**

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

**At least 13 children under the age of 16 were murdered in cases where the suspected, alleged, or convicted perpetrator was their mother's husband, boyfriend or intimate partner, or was the parent, guardian, baby-sitter, or household/family member of the child.**

**At least 8 women or children were murdered by an acquaintance, stranger, or an unknown perpetrator.**

**At least 1 woman is missing.**

**At least 24 children have been left motherless.**

## **WOMEN MURDERED:**

- 1. Kristina Zierman, 21 Maple Grove Missing January 24  
Body found June 5**

Kristina Zierman told her mother and a friend on January 24 that she planned to end her relationship with her abusive boyfriend, Christopher Seebold, 34. If something were to happen to her, "He did it," she said. That was the last day she was seen alive. A fisherman discovered Kristina's body, anchored with landscaping bricks, on June 5, in the Minnesota River near the Cedar Avenue bridge in Bloomington. Zierman and Seebold lived together until December of 2001 when she moved in with her mother because of Seebold's abuse. Zierman filed assault charges against Seebold, claiming he had put her in a chokehold and pushed her into a coffee table. Seebold was convicted of the assault against Kristina on October 5. Seebold and Zierman's three year-old son told his grandmother that he found his mother on the floor and that she was sleeping and he could not wake her. It was determined that Kristina had been strangled. The boy is now staying with relatives. Christopher Seebold was convicted in 1989 of attempted murder. He was charged with one count of first-degree murder while in a pattern of domestic abuse and with being a prohibited person in possession of a firearm. Seebold pleaded guilty to the murder in March of 2003 and received the maximum sentence of 40 years in prison.

- 2. Bonnie Givens, 33 Prior Lake January 27**

Bonnie Givens was shot and killed by her husband, Julius Givens, 38, in a murder-suicide after a three-hour standoff with police. Police were called after the couple's children informed neighbors that something bad was happening in the house and that they had been asked to leave by their father. All attempts at police negotiation with Julius failed. It appears that Bonnie was murdered by Julius early in the standoff and that Julius shot himself a few hours later, as police were approaching the house. Friends and family are unclear about what caused the domestic violence homicide. "They were wonderful people. I have no idea what happened," said a neighbor. The couple had two children who are now living with Bonnie's parents and also took care of Julius' teenaged son from another relationship.

- 3. Anne Nicole Gunther, 30 Bloomington March 5**

Anne Gunther was found fatally stabbed in the neck in the Richfield apartment of her ex-boyfriend, Kennedy Nyangweso, 36. Nyangweso was found by her side, critically injured from stab wounds to his neck. Police found a note by Nyangweso that said that Gunther's new boyfriend "killed us...Killed Anne 1<sup>st</sup> then me." Authorities questioned the Gunther's current boyfriend but released him after his story and alibi checked out. Nyangweso's wounds were determined to be self-inflicted and he was charged with one count of second-degree intentional murder. Nyangweso was sentenced to 25 years.

- 4. Deborah Hollermann, 41 Princeton March 22**

A car crash in Isanti County was a cover up for murder. Police originally believed that Deborah Hollermann died when the car she and her husband, Steven Hollermann, 40, were traveling in went off the road off of Highway 95 and hit a parked vehicle on the gravel shoulder. However, during an intensive investigation by authorities, Steven Hollermann revealed that he assaulted his wife prior to the crash.

According to Hollerman, he argued with his wife and pushed her head into a vehicle door post two or three times before the accident. Authorities believe the assault killed Deborah Hollerman and believe the accident was orchestrated by Hollerman to cover up the murder in that Hollerman appears to have made no attempt to avoid the collision with the other car. Steven Hollermann was sentenced to a longer than usual sentence for unintentional second-degree murder. District Judge James Reuter said Hollerman displayed cruelty that justified a 17 ½-year sentence instead of the 12 ½-year sentence recommended by state sentencing guidelines.

**5. Krista DeGrote, 29**

**Raymond**

**March 24**

Krista DeGrote was murdered by her husband, Darren DeGrote, 28, in their home. The cause of death was ruled as blunt force trauma to her head. Krista's body was found in a car in a ditch. Police quickly realized that Krista's injuries were not consistent with a fatal car accident. Authorities then searched the couple's home in Raymond and found blood spatters in the garage. It was determined that Darren DeGrote had murdered Krista at home and then placed her body in the car. The couple had two sons, ages 9 and 10. Darren DeGrote pleaded guilty in 2000 to a misdemeanor charge of making a false emergency call after he reported a car accident. Krista DeGrote reported a domestic violence incident to police in the mid-1990s after Darren struck her in the head. The police did not report why further action was not taken against Darren DeGrote after this domestic assault occurred. DeGrote was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to 25 years.

**6. Maureen Chapman, 27**

**Wabasha**

**April 27**

Maureen Chapman was found on a rural road near Millville. She was suffering from multiple stab wounds and died before an ambulance could arrive. Patrick Dick, 24, originally told police that he found the body and saw a black-clad man fleeing into the woods. It was later determined by authorities that Dick committed the murder. The criminal complaint stated that Dick and Chapman were co-workers and that Chapman had told two people that she was pregnant with Dick's child and that they were going to meet to decide what to do. Maureen's mother, Lorraine Chapman, stated, "She said he was harassing her and wanting to go out with her. Since he was married, she said no way." Maureen Chapman was the mother of five children, ages 12 to 1. The children are now living with their fathers or other family members. Patrick Dick pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced in July to 40 years in prison, a longer sentence than recommended by state sentencing guidelines. "The crime was committed with particular cruelty, was done from a relationship of trust..." said Judge Gerald Ring, who presided over the case.

**7. Cha'Nar Lavon Kennedy, 21**

**Coon Rapids**

**May 11**

Anthony Lavelle Edwards, 35, walked into the Hennepin County Jail and told authorities that he'd killed someone in Coon Rapids. Officers went to Cha'Nar Kennedy's townhouse and found her dead of an apparent gunshot wound. It is believed that Kennedy and Edwards had been involved in a relationship in the past but had remained friends. Edwards' aunt stated, "[His] head has never been right. He has issues. He was going to see a psychologist. It's an anger thing with him." Four children were in the townhouse at the time of the murder, Kennedy's 2 year-old daughter and three other children believed to be relatives spending the night. Edwards was previously convicted of assault and drug possession. Anthony Edwards was sentenced to 35 years in prison for second-degree murder.

**8. Rhoda Ann Stately, 31**

**Redby**

**May 28**

Rhoda Stately was stabbed to death in her Redby home by her husband, Joseph Wayne White, 36. The murder took place in front of the couple's three children, ages 13, 11, and 6. White told authorities that he and his wife got into a fight and he stabbed her twice. He was charged with first- and second-degree murder and also with assault for pointing a knife at a child who was at the scene and punching another child. White pleaded guilty to second-degree murder and was sentenced in February of 2003 to second-degree murder.

**9. Brooke Thompson, 22**

**Brooklyn Park**

**August 14**

Edward Johnson, 26, was charged with second-degree intentional murder for the stabbing death of his former girlfriend, Brooke Thompson, 22. One of Brooke's friends called police after Johnson called her and asked her to look after Thompson's 5 year-old daughter. The night before, Brooke had called her friend and said that Johnson wanted her to go to Chicago with him and if she didn't comply that he would put her in a sleeping bag in the trunk of his car. Police found Thompson's body in the bathroom of the couple's apartment as well as bloody clothes and a bloody knife in Johnson's car. Brooke's daughter told police that Johnson had been fighting with her mother the night before and that her mother was saying "stop" because Johnson was banging her head on the bathroom floor. Johnson has a previous record of assault and drug charges. Brooke's mother, Lori Thompson, said that her daughter no longer wanted a relationship with Edward Johnson. "That's what this was over. This shouldn't have happened," she said. Johnson pleaded guilty in February 2003 to second-degree intentional murder. He gave no reason in court as to why he committed the murder.

**10. Bonita L. Weber, 54**

**Bowstring Township**

**August 24**

A neighbor called police when she noticed that no activity had been seen at the Weber home for days. Police found Bonita Weber, 54, dead from a single gunshot wound. Sheriff Pat Medure stated that Douglas Weber, 59, had shot his wife and then turned the gun on himself. On the Tuesday before the murder Bonita Weber had asked to have an order for protection against Douglas dismissed.

**11. Willa Lind, 50**

**Minneapolis**

**September 8**

Relatives of Willa Lind, 50, found her shot to death in her basement. Police were called and when they approached the back of the house, they heard a "pop" and "what sounded like a body falling to the ground." A man was found in the kitchen, a handgun next to his body. It appears that Daryl Phillips, 44, had murdered his wife and then committed suicide as police approached. Neighbors said that the couple was in the process of separating and their house was for sale.

**12. Erin Shelton, 20**

**Minneapolis**

**October 5**

A 20 year-old Minneapolis women, Erin Shelton, died of a gunshot wound in her apartment. The man she was dating, Hakiim Nelthrope, 19, told authorities that he was intending to fire at a window near where Erin stood but when he attempted to uncock the gun, it went off and a bullet hit her in the forehead. Erin Shelton had a 3 year-old son, who was with relatives at the time of her murder. Hakiim was charged with

second-degree manslaughter. He originally told police that an intruder had shot Erin but later admitted to the shooting. Nelthrope was convicted and sentenced to 4 years in prison.

**13. Franchesca Gonzalez, 31**

**Bemidji**

**October 6**

Judith Gonzalez called police from a neighbor's home to say that her daughter, Franchesca Gonzalez, 31, had been shot. Police arrived on the scene to find Judith covered in blood. Two children, ages 9 and 10, were with her. Franchesca's body was lying in a pool of blood in the bedroom of the house. Captain Daryle Russell of the Bemidji Police Department counted at least four bullet wounds in Franchesca's body. Officers found the body of Quentin Roy, 37, of Red Lake, in his car, dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. According to witnesses, Roy came to the house, distraught over breaking up with Franchesca. Judith Gonzalez said that she had tried to wrestle the gun away from Roy and was slightly injured in the attempt. She also stated that her daughter had obtained an Order For Protection against Quentin Roy but the Beltrami District Court has no record of a protection order.

**14. Cindy Peterson, 45**

**Minneapolis**

**October 23**

Cindy Peterson was shot three times outside her Minneapolis home by Charles Mems, 45, her ex-boyfriend. Cindy was leaving for Las Vegas the next day to marry another man. Peterson's daughter, Selena, said to the judge at Mems' trial, "She was kind, gentle, loving, patient, and most of all, she was Mom." She said her mother was the "Kool-Aid mom" of the neighborhood because her home was where all the kids would come. Mems was found guilty of first-degree murder and sentenced to life in prison in May 2004. Because Mems had a previous conviction for rape, he will not be eligible for parole.

**15. Stephanie Ziegler, 33**

**Erhard**

**November 1**

The Otter Tail County Sheriff's office received a call on November 1 from a family member that Scott Ziegler had just murdered his wife and was about to commit suicide. Officers found Stephanie Ziegler, 33, shot to death and Scott Ziegler dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. Stephanie's murder left three young children motherless. They are in the care of their grandmother. An advocate for a battered women's program working with Stephanie said that she was preparing to leave Scott because of domestic violence but she unable to get her children away from her husband. "She was a wonderful, strong woman who was an inspiration to us all and luckily I told her at the last [support] group she was at," said the advocate.

**16. Lorene "Dolly" McIntyre, 50**

**St. Paul**

**December 7**

Dolly McIntyre's next-door neighbor, Tim Conway was awakened just before midnight to the sound of pounding on his front door. Just as Conway was getting out of bed he heard a gunshot and then saw a bullet shatter the glass pane of his door. He heard at least five other shots and called 911. Dolly McIntyre, 50, had been shot dead as she knocked on his door for help. Authorities say that her nephew, Richard Bruestle, 38, had stabbed her before he shot her multiple times. Dolly died on the way to Regions Hospital. Another neighbor said that he heard the suspect tell police that he had stabbed and killed his aunt, and to "shoot me." Bruestle has a long criminal history, including an arrest for sexual assault. He had moved in with his aunt in July after being released from a Colorado prison. "She was the neighbor you always wanted," said a neighbor, Jeff Hollihan. "She always said 'Hi.' And she'd shovel

the sidewalk if you weren't home. Richard Bruestle was initially charged with intentional second-degree murder but a Ramsey County grand jury indicted him on two first-degree murder charges in February 2003. In March he was convicted and sentenced to life in prison.

**17. Susan Radil, 39**

**Alexandria**

**December 16**

Timothy Radil, 42, was convicted in the murder of his wife, Susan Radil, 39. Deputies from the Douglas County Sheriff's Office were called to couple's home after receiving a report that a woman had fallen and was injured. Upon arrival, officers found Susan Radil outside the house and learned that she had sustained serious head injuries. She was transported to Douglas County Hospital and then airlifted to St. Cloud Hospital, where she later died. Timothy Radil was arrested at the hospital without incident, taken to the Stearns County Jail for questioning, and later transferred to the Douglas County Jail. Susan Radil was the mother of two children, ages 17 and 19. Timothy Radil was sentenced to 12 ½ years in prison in 2004.

**CHILDREN MURDERED:**

**1. Megan Tomlinson, 13**

**West St. Paul**

**January 28**

Megan Tomlinson was reported missing on January 28. When police questioned her brother, Scott Tomlinson, 16, he began to cry and handed them keys to a storage shed near the family's home. Inside the shed, police found Megan's body inside a sleeping bag. She had been strangled. Scott said, "I didn't mean it, it was an accident, we were wrestling." The initial complaint stated that Scott told a friend that he planned to kill his father and another family member and that he had told other friends about his desire to kill a family member. He attended a special high school for students with severe emotional and behavioral problems. A friend said of Scott, "He had a real temper on him. He had to have things his way all the time." He was initially charged with first- and second-degree murder, but the charges have been reduced to one charge of second-degree intentional murder and one charge of second-degree unintentional murder. Scott was sentenced to 12 years in prison.

**2. Stephen Burns, 13**

**Shoreview**

**February 24**

Donna Anderson, 48, a Shoreview obstetrician, received life in prison for murdering her thirteen year-old son, Stephen Burns, at his father's house in Burlingame, California. The boy's father, Frank Burns, was also stabbed as he attempted to help his son. Anderson had exhibited signs of mental illness for years before the murder but was ruled competent to stand trial. Donna Anderson had resigned from her job in January and Stephen was planning to move permanently to California to live with his father. Anderson shipped several boxes of her son's belongings to Burlingame and then flew out to meet him. Apparently she had delusions that her son would become involved in child pornography. While sitting in her ex-husband's kitchen, she watched her son walk into the room. She says she saw him as an angel. "Then I realized I couldn't rescue Stephen. I was the only one that was going to decide, was he going to go into this child-porn ring...and be exploited, or was he going to be an angel and pass away, and I'll take the torture. And that's the decision I made."

**3. Isac McCormack, 9 months****Chisholm****March 9**

The nine month-old baby boy was found dead in his bed by his parents. A 14 year-old Hibbing boy, who was babysitting, was charged with first-degree manslaughter in the death of Isac McCormack. The name of the boy has not been released by authorities. The teen-ager had watched the infant before and was a trusted babysitter. It was found that Isac had died from blows to the chest, resulting in injuries to his heart. When questioned, the babysitter confessed to hitting Isac twice before putting him to bed.

**4. Rita Burnette, 14****Naytahwaush****May 26**

Rita Burnette's strangled body was found in a wooded area near Naytahwaush, which is on the White Earth Reservation. Her cousin, Kevin James Brown, Jr., 21, has been arrested and indicted on four counts of first-degree murder, two with first-degree criminal sexual conduct, two with second-degree criminal sexual conduct). The charges refer to "causing the death of a human being while committing or attempting to commit sexual violence," said Mahnomen County Sheriff's Investigator Brad Athmann. Brown is being held of \$500,000 bail. Brown pled guilty to unintentional second-degree murder under a plea bargain in July of 2003 and was sentenced to 15 years in prison.

**5. Ryder Meyer, 3****Clarissa****June 21**

Russell Meyer, 29, asphyxiated both his three year-old son and himself in his pickup truck in his garage in Clarissa, MN. The little boy was found in the back seat of the truck, dead of carbon monoxide poisoning. "I picked him up out of the car. It just makes you want to cry," said Sheriff David Kircher, who found the bodies. Ryder's mother called authorities on Friday night after Russell Meyer failed to bring her son home. She had obtained an Order for Protection against Russell Meyer and the two were involved in a custody dispute. Meyer had written a suicide note and also called Ryder's mother that night, trying to coax her to come to his house, which she refused to do. "That was probably a good thing," said Kircher. "We may have had three dead instead of two."

**6. Mia Powassin, 15 months****Warroad****July 5**

Authorities were called to the house where Mia Powassin, 15 months, lived after being told that the baby was in distress. Mia's mother was at work at the time and a babysitter was caring for Mia. The child was rushed to Roseau Are Hospital, where she later died of head trauma. The Ramsey County medical examiner's office ruled Mia's death a homicide. Three people have been charged in the case. Justin Dean Jones, 14, was charged with one count of first-degree murder and two counts of second-degree murder and was certified to stand trial as an adult. Curtis A. Korb, 21, was also been charged with one count of first-degree murder and two counts of second-degree murder. Lisa D. Niece, 20, was charged with aiding an offender for lying to authorities about events that occurred the night Mia died. All three suspects are being held in the Roseau County Jail in lieu of bail. Jones was sentenced to 25 years in prison, Korb was sentenced to 13 years and Niece was never convicted.

**7. Quentin Jones, 8****New Hope****August 11**

New Hope police responded to a call from concerned relatives and found Quentin Jones, 8, dead from multiple stab wounds. His mother, Latrice Jones, 29, was arrested and charged with one count of second-degree murder. Latrice Jones told police, "I killed him. He wasn't listening to Mohammed," referring to

her ex-boyfriend. Judge Steven Pihalja ordered Jones to undergo a psychiatric evaluation. Records in her apartment show that Jones had been treated for an acute psychosis at North Memorial Medical Center the previous week and that she had a history of bipolar disorder. Quentin was in second grade and was known as a cheerful boy who “liked math and doing a good job on his school work,” said the principal of his school, Crest View Elementary in Brooklyn Park. On October 11, Judge Lucy Wieland found that the state proved that Latrice Jones had committed second-degree murder but found Jones not guilty by reason of mental illness due to testimony that she had paranoid schizophrenia at the time of the murder of her son. Jones was committed indefinitely to the Minnesota Security Hospital in St. Peter.

**8. Da’Shawn Copeland, 2**

**Minneapolis**

**September 9**

Police responded to a call of a child not breathing and found Da’Shawn Copeland, 2, naked on the bathroom floor of a Minneapolis duplex. He seemed to be malnourished and dehydrated. The home’s residents did not immediately open the door to police and the floors appeared to have been recently washed. There were signs that Da’Shawn had been dead for some time before police got to the scene. Da’Shawn’s death has been ruled a homicide, due to blunt-force injuries and neglect. The little boy’s grandmother, Channie Copeland, remembered her grandson as a bright child, “He would talk to every person, dog, cat, and flower along the way,” she said. Deandre Ellis, 18, and his girlfriend, Adriane Williams, the child’s godmother, who were caring for Da’Shawn for the weekend, have been charged with second-degree murder. The criminal complaint states that the two hit Da’Shawn at least five times, including one blow that caused the little boy to fall and hit his head on the dresser. The complaint also states that Ellis and Williams hit Da’Shawn, starved him, and deprived him of water because he wouldn’t sleep and because he cried for his mother. Ellis and Williams were charged with second-degree murder. Williams was convicted of second-degree murder and sentenced to four years.

**9. Kayla Xuan Mai Huynh, 2**

**Minneapolis**

**September 12**

Kayla Huynh, 2, died of violent shaking at the hands of her mother, Chanda Thi Huynh, 26, at Children’s Hospital in Minneapolis. A family friend said Huynh became enraged when her daughter soiled her underwear and took her into the bedroom where he could hear the mother yelling and the child screaming. Kayla never regained consciousness and was pronounced brain dead that evening. Police say Huynh admitted to shaking her daughter. “The defendant admitted that she lost control and began shaking her and then (Kayla) became limp.” Huynh remains in Hennepin County Jail in lieu of \$100,000 bail to face second-degree murder charges. In February 2003, she was ruled competent to stand trial, despite her attorney’s assertion that Huynh had no memory of the incident. Huynh was convicted of unintentional second-degree murder and sentenced to 12 ½ years in prison. Chanda Thi Huynh is pregnant and County Attorney Amy Klobuchar has stated that she expects authorities will seek to terminate Huynh’s parental rights when the baby is born. Huynh’s 4 year-old son is in the custody of his father’s family.

**10. Joseph Il Woo Kim, 4**

**Coon Rapids**

**September 18**

Joseph Kim died in the hospital from head injuries with features of asphyxia he received while in the care of a 12-year old babysitter at a relative’s home in Eagan on the Sunday before. The medical examiner has ruled Joseph’s death a homicide but the 12-year old has not been charged with a crime at this date, although he has been questioned extensively by the police. He allegedly told authorities that he intentionally hit Joseph over the head with a “freezee pop” more than once, and that he hit a golf ball in the garage that ricocheted off the wall and accidentally hit Joseph in the head. The little boy’s heart has



been donated. "It is good to make somebody get a life from my son's heart," said Joseph's mother Chi Yon Chung. "It is a really beautiful thing. I am sure the other parents will be happy...He was the one child I have. Now I feel empty; I can't feel my heart. He will be my heart forever and ever, because he is my son." The 12 year-old who had been questioned in connection with Joseph's murder has returned to Korea, where he holds citizenship, with permission of Dakota County District Judge Michael Sovis. No criminal charges will be filed in this case, despite Kim's death being ruled a homicide.

**11. Austin Olson, 8 months**

**Otsego**

**November 7**

Cynthia Henderson of Rogers, 32, was charged with second-degree murder in connection with the death of Austin Olson of Otsego, 8 months, for whom she was caring. Shortly after noon on November 5, Henderson called 911 to report that Austin had been injured when her own child threw a toy at him. She later told investigators that she had bathed Austin after his initial injuries and had dropped him in the bathtub. Emergency responders found the baby nearly unresponsive and transported him to North Memorial Hospital. All medial intervention was unsuccessful and the child was determined to be brain dead two days later. According to the sheriff's department, Austin had suffered other minor injuries while in Cynthia Henderson's care. Sheriff Patrick McGowan described the murder as "a horrible tragedy. It is difficult to imagine that anyone would inflict injuries of this magnitude on anyone, let alone an 8 month-old infant." A CAT scan on Austin revealed a skull fracture and other injuries consistent with blunt force trauma and shaking injuries. An autopsy also revealed rib fractures. Cynthia Henderson was sentenced in June of 2002 to 12 ½ years in prison for unintentional second-degree murder.

**12. Faduma Said Moussa, 6 weeks**

**St. Paul**

**November 9**

Paramedics were called by the mother of Faduma Said Moussa, 6 weeks old, after she returned home to find her daughter not breathing. The baby's father, Said Moussa Gouleed, 33, had been caring for his daughter and told authorities that her injuries were caused by his dropping her after tripping. Faduma was pronounced dead an hour after arriving at Children's Hospital in St. Paul. Her injuries included head trauma, skull fractures, soft tissue injuries, a fractured leg, and considerable bruising on both upper thighs. Her X-rays also showed that the baby had multiple healing fractures to her ribs and extremities. Said Moussa Gouleed was arrested after doctors said that Faduma's injuries were not consistent with an accidental fall. He has been charged with second-degree murder. The baby had previously gone to the hospital with head injuries but there was no investigation of possible child abuse at that time. Faduma's 2 year-old brother was checked for injuries and found to be in good health. He is in the custody of his mother. Said Moussa Gouleed was found guilty of unintentional second-degree murder in December of 2003. During his trial, Gouleed first tried to blame Faduma's death on his son and later, his wife. He was sentenced to 18 years in prison.

**13. Amanda Lutz, 6 months**

**Inver Grove Heights**

**November 11**

Amanda Lutz, 6 months, was rushed to United Children's Hospital in St. Paul after a report that the baby was not breathing. She was pronounced dead upon arrival at the hospital. Two days later, on November 13, Inver Grove Heights Police were contacted by Amanda's father, David Lutz, who reported that his wife, Diana Lutz, 32, was distraught over the death of her daughter and was missing. Police were dispatched to the AmericInn Hotel in Inver Grove Heights and found Diana dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. She had apparently told her husband on the telephone that she had killed Amanda and confided in two other individuals that she had taken her daughter's life because it was too painful for her

to watch her baby girl suffering from a severe medical condition Amanda had had since birth. She told one of those individuals that she had smothered Amanda with a pillow. The investigation has revealed that Diana Lutz stole a loaded handgun from a friend's home, which she used to commit suicide.

## **WOMEN AND CHILDREN MURDERED BY AN AQUAINTANCE, STRANGER OR AN UNKNOWN PERPETRATOR:**

### **1. Angela Aho, 20**

**Cohasset**

**April 17**

Angela Aho, 20, was shot by Brett Lessard, 25 in his apartment. Aho had asked Lessard to pose for a photograph for college class project. Aho stood a few feet away from Lessard to take the picture as he pointed a loaded gun at her. The gun went off, struck Angela Aho in the eye, killing her almost instantly. Prosecutor Todd Webb told jurors at Lessard's trial that Lessard acted recklessly by pointing a loaded gun at the victim and that Lessard had been drinking that night. "It doesn't matter if he intentionally pulled the trigger or not," he said. Lessard was cleared of second-degree murder charges in May of 2003 but was convicted of second-degree manslaughter. In July he was sentenced to four years in prison and ordered to pay \$12,500 in restitution.

### **2. Rebecca Rasmussen, 27**

**St. Louis Park**

**Body found May 1**

A worker at a New Brighton recycling plant found the body of Rebecca Rasmussen, 27, in a pile of cardboard and paper. She was fully clothed and appeared to have been dead for about a week. She had to be identified using her fingerprints. The Ramsey County medical examiner later ruled her death a homicide. "We believe the body was brought into the facility during a delivery," said Bob Jacobson, New Brighton's public safety director. "Now we just have to track where it came from."

### **3. Faye Nelson, 25**

**Duluth**

**August 20**

A Cass Lake man was charged with murder in the arson death of Faye Nelson, 25. Cheyenne Anthony Budreau, 20, was charged with two counts of second-degree murder, three counts of attempted second-degree murder, and two counts of second-degree arson after setting a fire at the home of Jim and Della Jones outside of Cass Lake. The couple and their son were injured and their mobile home was destroyed in the blaze. Faye Nelson had been spending the night with the Jones family. Apparently Budreau and Andrew Jones had been involved in a fight that evening and Budreau told a friend that he would burn down the Joneses' home. Budreau was convicted of second-degree murder.

### **4. Cheryl Thompson, 27**

**Burnsville**

**October 21**

Cheryl Thompson, 27, was reported missing by her brother when she didn't arrive home from work. Later that day police were called when a neighbor saw a man going through a car in Burnsville. When police found Cheryl's credit card and cash card on the suspect, Brian Batchelor, 19, he was arrested on suspicion of credit card fraud. He was in jail when Cheryl's body was found under a piece of cardboard behind Destiny Christian Center in Burnsville. Batchelor had been charged in September with stealing Cheryl's car. Dakota County court records show he pleaded guilty in October in two auto theft cases and was fined and given a 30-day jail sentence. Batchelor was acquainted with Thompson through his 16 year-old girlfriend, a neighbor of Thompson's, who had babysat for Cheryl's 3 year-old son. The

girlfriend told police that Batchelor had told her he was going to kidnap and murder a woman she believed was Thompson. While in Dakota County jail, Batchelor decided on a plan to “get money from Cheryl Thomspson.” He kidnapped her when she returned from work early in the morning and forced her to give her PIN and password for her credit and bankcards. Brian Batchelor duct taped Cheryl Thomspson’s mouth and covered her nose and mouth with his hands until she asphyxiated. He then allegedly wrapped Cheryl’s torso, legs, and head in duct tape before dumping her body behind the church. Cheryl Thompson was a doctoral student and an advocate at Fairview WomanKind, a domestic violence program in Edina, where she helped she helped women who were being battered. She was a loving mother to her 3 year-old son, Aidan. In June 2003, Batchelor pleaded guilty to first-degree murder. Judge Duane Harves sentenced him to life in prison, with a minimum of 30 years.

**5. Erika Dalquist, 21**

**Brainerd**

**Disappeared October 30, 2002  
Body Found May 15, 2004**

The body of Erika Dalquist was found in May of 2004 after she disappeared in 2002. Erika had not been seen or heard from since the night of October 30, when she was last seen leaving a Brainerd club, Tropical Nites. She was waiting for a taxi home around 1 a.m. when she recognized a man she knew and told friends to cancel her taxi because she would get a ride home with him. William Myears, 25, was charged with second-degree murder. Erika’s skeletal remains were found on a ranch outside of Brainerd owned by Myears’ grandparents. Myears was arrested in January of 2003 in connection with Erika’s disappearance, but was released when authorities did not have enough evidence to charge him. He left Brainerd to join a traveling carnival. He was re-arrested and convicted of second-degree murder.

**6. May Pelto, 88**

**Maple Grove**

**November 9**

A relative found the body of 88 year-old May Pelto in her Maple Grove home, dead from head injuries inflicted by a blunt object. Her murderer had also sexually assaulted her. There were no signs of forced entry in May Pelto’s townhouse. There are currently no suspects in her murder, although investigators have received information about possible motives in the murder but have said that discussing them would hurt the case. “It is a nightmare. It is too ugly an end to get around,” said Ms. Pelto’s son, Gary McCullum. Nicholas Bartylla was charged with May’s murder in 2004 after he had to provide a DNA sample when convicted of a home burglary in Elk River. In 2007, he was convicted of first-degree murder. He was sentenced to life in prison and will not be eligible for parole for at least 30 years.

**7. Eleanor Stich, 79**

**New Brighton**

**November 12**

Eleanor Stich, who was beaten in her New Brighton home on September 5, 2001, was taken off life support on November 12 at Mercy Hospital in Coon Rapids. She had been comatose from severe brain injuries received in the 2001 beating, when two men broke into her house, beat Eleanor and her husband, and stole their pickup truck. Patrick Engebrecht and Thomas O’Flanagan were sentenced on October 14 after being convicted of multiple charges, including attempted murder. The perpetrators are also serving federal prison sentences for crimes committed in Yellowstone National Park two days after Stich’s fatal beating. Eleanor Stich’s death has been ruled a homicide but Engebrecht and O’Flanagan cannot be tried again, said Ramsey County Attorney Susan Gaertner.

Tyesha Edwards, 11, was sitting at the dining room table in her family home in Minneapolis, doing her homework, when a bullet went through the wall and struck Tyesha in the chest and killed her. Prosecutors said Myron Damarlo Burrell faces one count of first-degree drive-by murder for the death of Tyesha Edwards. They charged two others, Isaiah Dwane Tyson and Hans Sug Williams, with participating in the killing. All three are being held on \$1 million bail each. The Hennepin County Attorney's office said an eyewitness identified Burrell, 17, as the person who fired the gun outside Edwards' house. Prosecutors said Tyson, 21, provided Burrell with the gun, and that Williams, 23, drove the getaway car and hid the gun after the shooting. The complaint alleges that Burrell fired at someone he believed was a rival gang member, but the shots missed the intended target, and one went through the side of Tyesha's house and struck her. Family member Myoescha Gomez said, "It's hard 'cause she was with me like a sister. She used to stand up for me and everything, so it's hard. It's like I lost a sister or something." "I have to live with the loss of my daughter. Not seeing my daughter again. Not ever talking to my daughter again," said her father, Jimmie Edwards, Jr.

**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 relies upon news accounts. No state or federal agency collects comprehensive data on femicides or domestic homicides. In addition, the murders of women of color, poor women, rural women, lesbians and women and girls used in prostitution may be underreported in our listing as they may be unreported in mainstream newspapers.**

**The 2002 Femicide Report – Women and Children Murdered is compiled from news accounts. Please contact us 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.**