

DAVID HEALY

Appendix 4: Effects of Zoloft from SSRISStories.org

Contents

1. Family slaughtered: the wake of the antidepressant (ZOLOFT).....	1
2. Colorado mental-health counselor charged with murdering infant son (ZOLOFT).....	3
3. Wolfforth man in jail for breaking into neighbors home naked (ZOLOFT).....	7
4. Woman gets probation in golf-cart attack (ZOLOFT)	8
5. Man with No Criminal Record Becomes Violent: Fatally Shot by Police (ZOLOFT)	9
6. Woman drives to Cemetery and sets herself on Fire	10
7. Infant's mother testifies as Tampa boy, 12, stands trial in Georgia death (ZOLOFT)	14
8. Suicide ruling remains in Colo. restaurateur's Port Chester death after toxicology results (ZOLOFT).....	17
9. Innocents betrayed by a mum (ZOLOFT)	18
10. Cops: Man stabbed wife, then set himself on fire (PROZAC).....	21
11. MAN LOSES BID TO VISIT CHILDREN JAILED ON CHARGES OF ATTACKING FAMILY WITH DRAIN CLEANER (PROZAC).....	22
12. DEPRESSED MOM ATTACKS DAUGHTERS WITH HEDGE-CLIPPERS: (UNSPECIFIED ANTIDEPRESSANT).....	25

DAVID HEALY

JULY 30TH

This collection of newspaper account of homicides and suicides on SSRIs such as Zoloft, Paxil and Prozac is offered to help convey to the court how suicides and homicides on Zoloft differ from the kinds of suicides and homicides otherwise encountered. They often involve acts that appear quite bizarre and senseless.

The reports are taken from SSRI Stories.org, a website linked to RxISK.org that was set up by Rosie Meysenburg in the first instance. Rosie is not dead but I can supply the Court with the transcript of an interview done with her before her death that offers a complete history of the origins of this site. The cataloguing has been done by a colleague, Julie Wood, from Toronto, who can supply a declaration on the procedures used to classify the stories.

1. Family slaughtered: the wake of the antidepressant (ZOLOFT)

Libération Société

Eric FAVEREAU

July 3, 2010

Vendée: Questions raised about the disinhibiting effect of a drug prescribed to the homicidal father.

This is a classic side effect, often mentioned in the literature, although it has never been officially established: antidepressants may have a disinhibiting effect and increase the tendency to act on thoughts, especially suicidal thoughts. Was it an antidepressant that caused the death of Emmanuel Beaud, the Vendée doctor who killed his four children and his wife and then committed suicide on May 30 after taking Zoloft?

"He was taking antidepressants at the time of the tragedy, investigators said Friday. **Toxicology analyzes tests show the presence of a molecule therapeutic dosage of sertraline.** "This is an antidepressant used to treat depression and anxiety, better known under the brand name Zoloft", summed up La Roche-sur-Yon prosecutor, Xavier Pavageau.

However, the analyzes show that there was no "overdosing" or "excessive consumption". "The question is whether therapeutic doses of the drug are likely, if poorly monitored or inappropriately prescribed, to cause effects such as suicidality or aggression towards others", noted the magistrate.

Beaud Emmanuel, 35, was a respected man in his village. A country doctor, he was found hanging in the living room of his house with a bloody log and a kitchen knife at his feet. His wife, Sylvie, 35, lay slaughtered on the bed in her room, her body bearing several stab marks. Four children, three boys 3, 5 and 7 years and a girl of 9 years, were discovered in their pajamas in bed, dead from violent blows to the head.

Currently, these serial murders seem inexplicable. Several relatives have blamed overwork and described Emmanuel Becaud as "a very dedicated doctor".

The general practitioner would have shown signs of disturbance in the days before the killing, including difficulty speaking and concentrating. **"On May 26, he started another antidepressant but it caused an itch, so he switched to sertraline,"** said the prosecutor.

Family meals. Anxiolytics and morphine were found in his pockets and in the medicine cabinet, and this is why toxicological tests were ordered by the judge. These analyzes revealed the presence of two anxiolytics in the children. The bodies were discovered by the maternal grandfather who was concerned when the family did not show up for Sunday lunch." He was tired, he worked too much," he told investigators.

Very shocked, Mayor Pouzauges, Michel Roy, had told the doctor Becaud "was dedicated to his profession of general practitioner and was concerned about the future of medicine in rural areas."

Hyperactivity. Can we, then, blame the drug for the occurrence of this tragedy? Anne Castot, a Director of the French Agency for Sanitary Safety of Health Products (AFSSAPS) remains very cautious. She said she was not aware of the specific impact of Zoloft. "Perhaps it was pre-existing mental illness", she pointed out. In any case, this highlights the side effects of this class of antidepressants, "in particular the risk of suicide . This risk must be monitored throughout treatment. The onset of symptoms, such as insomnia, irritability, anxiety, hyperactivity, nervousness, and especially suicidal ideation requires frequent consultations." "But, says Anne Castot, you can never assume the cause was a side drug effect."

2. Colorado mental-health counselor charged with murdering infant son (ZOLOFT)

By Tom McGhee
The Denver Post
Posted: 06/08/2010

Stephanie Rochester looks to her public defender, Megan Ring, at the Boulder County Justice Center on Monday. Rochester is charged with murdering her infant son. (Paul Aiken, Daily Camera)

It took three attempts over nearly 12 hours for Stephanie Rochester to smother the infant son she feared was autistic, according to an arrest affidavit unsealed Monday.

Rochester, 34, a mental-health counselor who worked with autistic kids at Children's Hospital, was charged Monday with first-degree murder and child abuse resulting in the death of her 6-month-old son, Rylan.

As she entered the Boulder District courtroom, wearing a suicide-prevention smock under a blue jail jumpsuit, she turned and looked to the gallery where two women, who said they are family members, sat. One of them put her hand to her heart and pursed her lips as she looked at Rochester.

Her husband, Lloyd Rochester IV, 29, was not in the courtroom.

The Rochesters brought their unresponsive baby from their home in Superior to the nearby Avista Adventist Hospital in Louisville early the morning of June 1. Attempts to revive him failed.

At the hospital, Rochester told a Boulder County sheriff's detective that she had been depressed and suicidal and had killed the baby as he slept in his crib.

She was arrested and has since been held without bond in the Boulder County Jail. A preliminary hearing has been set for Sept. 8.

During a follow-up interview after she was taken into custody, Rochester told investigators that in the weeks before Rylan's death, she had been anxious and depressed and became increasingly concerned the baby was autistic. She discussed her worries with a pediatrician who told her the boy was developing normally and there were no signs of a disorder.

Rochester discussed her depression with a midwife from Boulder Nurse Midwives about a week before the death. She was prescribed the antidepressant Zoloft.

On May 26, she asked her mother-in-law, Janice Rochester, for help caring for Rylan "because she was having increasingly frequent suicidal thoughts," according to the warrant.

She then stayed with Janice Rochester until her husband returned from a business trip on May 28.

When the baby, who had thrush, a relatively common yeast infection of the mouth and throat, became increasingly fussy and refused to eat on May 31, the couple took him to Children's Hospital's urgent-care clinic in Broomfield.

During the two hours they waited to see a doctor, "Lloyd made a comment that he didn't know it was going to be like this, meaning having a child," the warrant said.

They left the clinic without seeing a doctor, intending to see one the following day.

When they arrived home about 7 p.m., Stephanie Rochester put Rylan in his crib. "She thought, 'I've got to do something.' She told (the investigator) she has had a lot of suffering in her life and she didn't want to suffer any more or have Rylan suffer," the affidavit said.

While he was in his crib, Rochester put a plastic bag over Rylan's head and then put a blanket on his face, the affidavit said. "She said that she had conducted research on the computer and read that carbon-monoxide poisoning deaths don't hurt . . . she did not want Rylan to hurt."

After a short time, she removed the bag and the child was still breathing. She left the room and she and her husband talked as they ate. They talked about having fun, the affidavit said. "Stephanie said that she knew they would not have fun while they were caring for a severely autistic child."

When her husband went to the computer, she went back to Rylan's room and placed three folded baby blankets over the boy's face to stop his breathing, the affidavit said.

About an hour later, she "got nervous" and took the blankets from his face. Rylan's eyes were open and he wasn't responsive, though he continued to breathe. Her husband came into the room to check on the boy and the couple went to bed.

Lloyd Rochester later told police that Rylan was sleeping with eyes open when he checked on him, and he assumed he was fine.

Stephanie Rochester told police that she heard the baby whimpering as she lay in bed.

At about 2:30 a.m., she took two or more adult-sized blankets, folded them and placed them on his head without applying pressure. "She put the blankets on his head to stop Rylan from breathing," the warrant said.

"Stephanie stated she intended to kill herself as well, however, she did not have a plan on how to do that. She said she could not kill herself and leave Lloyd with the burden of raising Rylan."

Rochester told investigators that at approximately 6 a.m., she thought about going into the garage and killing herself but instead went to the baby's room. She took the blankets off the baby and "just lost it" when she realized what she had done. She threw the blankets into a guest room so Lloyd would not see them.

Thirty minutes later, Rochester asked her husband to come into the baby's room. "He noted that Rylan was not breathing and was warm to the touch," the warrant said. "He threw on shirt and pants and grabbed Rylan from the crib."

Together, they went to the hospital.

During the interview after her arrest, a detective asked about a blanket that was over Rylan's head when her husband came into the infant's room.

"Stephanie said that the monkey and bunny blanket was over Rylan's head, in addition to the adult blankets, when she killed him.

"She said he always slept with monkey and bunny blanket," the affidavit said.
Tom McGhee: 303-954-1671 or tmcghee@denverpost.com

3. Wolfforth man in jail for breaking into neighbors home naked (ZOLOFT)

Posted: Apr 07, 2010 4:25 PM CDT

By Tiffany Pelt

LUBBOCK, TX (KCBD) - A Wolfforth man is behind bars after breaking into a neighbor's home, completely naked.

Wolfforth Police say 33-year-old Kelly Farrar was arrested shortly after 2 a.m. Tuesday after forcing his way into the Whitten Family's garage without any clothes on. Victim Jenny Whitten says Farrar was incoherent, screaming profanities, and running back and forth.

Whitten says Farrar got into one of their vehicle and began beating the dash board. Whitten says her husband Jeff finally got Farrar out, but Farrar then forced his way into their home. Whitten and her 16-year-old son locked themselves in a room to call 9-1-1 as her husband struggled to get Farrar back into the garage.

Wolfforth Police arrived shortly after – surprised at the scene they pulled up to. "Well this isn't a normal burglary. This isn't something we deal with on a daily basis, and it's probably been several years since I've seen one of this nature," said Wolfforth Police Chief Rick Scott.

Whitten says Farrar resisted arrest and kicked out one of the windows in the patrol car. She says police pulled out a taser but Farrar calmed down before police had to use it.

Some of Farrar's family members contacted KCBD Newschannel 11 and say a doctor prescribed him the antidepressant Zoloft. There are documented cases of bad reactions to this medication and Farrar's family believes he is one of those examples. They say Farrar never would have done this if he had been in his right mind.

"Whether it's medication or not, we do not know. We've certainly had reports from family members of this gentlemen that have said medication could have played a role," said Scott.

Farrar is charged with burglary of a habitation with intent, resisting arrest, and criminal mischief. If convicted Farrar could face up to 99 years in prison.

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4. Woman gets probation in golf-cart attack (ZOLOFT)

By FRANK FERNANDEZ, Staff Writer

BUNNELL -- A woman who turned a golf cart into a weapon and intentionally ran down and dragged another woman for about 15 yards was sentenced Thursday to three years' probation. Linda Lee Pearce, 42, of Daytona Beach entered a plea of no contest to felony battery, which could have sent her to prison for up to five years.

Circuit Judge Kim C. Hammond withheld adjudication, meaning the decision won't appear as a conviction on Pearce's record. Hammond also ordered Pearce not to have any contact with the victim and to pay restitution of \$6,299 at \$175 per month, said Chris Kelly, spokesman for the State Attorney's Office.

The sentence was part of a negotiated plea made in consultation with the victim, Kelly said.

Pearce, who told a psychologist she had anger problems, declined comment when reached by phone Thursday.

"I'm not telling you (expletive deleted)," Pearce said before hanging up.

Pearce was arrested in March after deputies said she intentionally ran over Verna Boylan, 57, near horseshoe pits behind the Roadhouse Bar near Flagler Beach, according to a report from the Flagler County Sheriff's Office.

Boylan was watching horseshoe games on St. Patrick's Day when Pearce, behind the wheel of the golf cart, spotted her. Pearce told a passenger in the cart, "Oh, there's the (expletive) . . . I'm going to run her over, " according to the report.

Boylan said in a phone interview Thursday that she heard Pearce. "I just looked over 'cause I heard her say that and next thing I know I was already under (the cart)," Boylan said.

She said she feared her life was over. "I thought that was it," Boylan said. "My head is going under that tire and that's the end of me." She heard people shouting at Pearce.

"I heard everybody screaming 'stop, stop, stop,' but she wouldn't stop," Boylan said. "She went faster." After the cart finally stopped, Pearce made her getaway in another golf cart. Deputies later found Pearce "visibly intoxicated" at her home, according to the report. Boylan was left badly bruised and emotionally battered. "I couldn't think," she said Thursday. "I was terrified. I still am. But they just told me she can't come near me."

Pearce told a psychologist in August she was angry at Boylan because she had spray-painted Pearce's girlfriend's car, according to a psychological evaluation in the court file.

Boylan denied Thursday, as she has done in the past, that she had anything to do with spray-painting the car. Boylan said she has never had a problem with the woman who owns the car and wouldn't do anything to her.

Pearce told the psychologist she had been doing well on a combination of Xanax, (for anxiety) Zoloft (for depression) and Geodon (for bipolar disorder and other problems) but just before the golf cart incident she no longer could get Geodon, the report states. The medication withdrawal produced agitation, restlessness and anxiety, as well as depression and social avoidance, the report states. Pearce admitted to having had two or three beers before the incident, the report states.

5. Man with No Criminal Record Becomes Violent: Fatally Shot by Police (ZOLOFT)

The Wilkes Barre Times Leader, (PA)

June 13, 2008

ROUND ROCK, Texas (KXAN) -- A Williamson County grand jury decided Thursday that three officers involved in a fatal shooting at the beginning of April were justified in their use of deadly force.

The police department said the April 1 shooting death of Bobby Lee Williams, 22, was an "open-and-shut case."

The story began when a neighbor on Ameswood Drive called police, saying Bobby Lee Williams and a woman were fighting.

An officer said he found the 22-year-old man was naked and running through the street.

From police dashboard camera video, Williams can be seen holding Officer Andy McKinney's baton in his hands, threatening the officer as he approaches. McKinney had already maced Williams during a struggle over the baton.

The video shows McKinney firing a shot. It grazes Williams, who sits and even lies on the ground as four officers surround him.

Yet Williams doesn't surrender and instead walks toward family members nearby. That was when officers fired the fatal shots.

The three officers involved were McKinney, Craig Cargill and Sandra Wright. They will remain on paid administrative leave, pending an internal affairs investigation.

William's death was Round Rock's first fatal police shooting in 10 years. Williams, who had been staying at the home with his half-sister, was from New York and did not have a criminal history.

Except for Zoloff, no other prescriptions or drugs were found in Williams' system.

Round Rock officers carry pepper spray but not Taser devices. Police haven't said whether Williams was pepper-sprayed before he was shot.

Valentine Olvera was the witness who called 911.

"I was screaming at him like, 'What the hell is wrong with you?' He's just looking at me and laughing, and I'm like, 'What's wrong with you?' And he decided to get in the car. He took off, completely naked, and left his clothes right on the grass," Olvera said.

6. Woman drives to Cemetery and sets herself on Fire (ZOLOFT)

EXCERPTS from OPEN MY EYES TO MY OWN WORTH

February 4, 1996

Author: MARK E. JONES TIMES LEADER STAFF WRITER

One time Judy Kester got depressed and asked her mother, if anything bad happens to me, who will take care of my cat? Judy was like that. She hated to see suffering. All her life, she put other people's concerns ahead of her own. That's why no one -- not even her family and friends -- can fully grasp why Judy left home on a Monday morning, drove 13 miles to an icy graveyard and burned herself to death.

They found Judy lying on a narrow road in Pine Hill Cemetery, a bumpy patchwork of headstones and evergreens that jut from a Shickshinny hillside. It was almost 7:30 a.m. on Feb. 6, the coldest day of 1995. She had removed her light-gray, hooded jacket, folded it and placed it on the snow. On top, she neatly stacked her gloves, wristwatch and glasses. Finally she rested.

Nestled below an arborvitae, the so-called tree-of-life, Judy could look down on West Butler Street's rooftops as families prepared for another busy day in their busy lives. Judy was scheduled to meet a therapist at 10 a.m. They were expected to talk about her depression. Instead Judy came to this familiar ground: a spot near her paternal grandparents' tombstone and a cottage, just over the hill, where she had lived as a baby.

Judy poured gasoline over her body from a two-gallon plastic tank. Then lit a stick match. Only the soles of her feet were unburned. She died about 18 hours later at Lehigh Valley Hospital in

Allentown, nine days shy of her 37th birthday. "The last time I talked with her on the phone, she had visited an elderly woman who liked to bake," says older sister Debbie O'Keefe, 39, of Moscow, Pa. "So Judy had taken her flour and sugar and, I don't know what else, chocolate chips maybe."

That's the Judy her family knew best: the kind, loving, gentle woman who would cross-stitch a blanket for anyone, even her doctor's wife, who was expecting a baby. Judy was a nurse. She adored babies, cuddled them, sang to them and relished her early jobs in hospital nurseries. She never married but yearned to start a family.

Born to a Baptist missionary couple, Judy was the fifth of eight children -- David, James, Paul, Debbie, Peter, Samuel and Ruth. At 9, Judy was baptized full-immersion style in a farm pond. She memorized hymns like most kids learn nursery rhymes. Her adult soprano voice was "gorgeous," says a former duet partner. "When everyone was singing, Judy could sing an octave higher to harmonize." That's the Judy her friends knew best: a jolly woman, always aiming to please, trying to fit in and yet wanting desperately to be noticed.

Judy became a prisoner of depression, unable to leave her aluminum trailer in the rural Sweet Valley. When the phone rang, depression stopped her from answering. Many days it kept her from going to work. It gave her pains that doctors could not explain. It even prevented her from walking a few yards around a forsythia hedge to the farmhouse next door, the home of her parents, the Rev. Floyd Kester, 68, and Mrs. Evelyn Kester, 70. "During depression Judy would go to her scripture and turn on her hymns, the good Christian music," Mrs. Kester says, "to get her mind straightened out." Song could give Judy temporary solace, not long-term relief.

Scientists have not yet unlocked the origin of depression. Harvard psychiatrist Dr. Douglas Jacobs says, "We believe it's a biochemical malfunctioning in the brain that affects those centers that control mood, emotions, thoughts and feelings." Years ago, people dismissed the "black cloud" as a character flaw, and families protected a depressed person as if the illness were a shameful secret.

Judy once confided to her mother that she had threatened suicide while on duty at Nesbitt Memorial Hospital, Kingston. No public records exist to confirm that. However, in a letter written to family and friends, Judy reflected on many physical problems -- including a hyperactive adrenal gland, hiatal hernia, severe sleep apnea and arthritis -- that troubled her that year. Unable to work, I found myself pleading with my doctor to do something for me or the next time he'd hear from me would be in the Obituary Column. My future looked bleak at best . . . Jack Kevorkian was becoming a hero in my thinking.

Judy never walked into a home empty-handed. She took food, homemade crafts or Balderdash, her favorite board game. Eventually the family would be seated at a kitchen table, swapping stories and laughing. Judy loved to laugh. Until the depression got her.

By January 1995, it had returned. Judy tried to get help. She began taking an antidepressant called Zoloft. She asked church members for prayer. On the final weekend of her life, she called a Christian therapist at Cornerstone Family Counseling in Williamsport.

"Judy had told me two years before that she would never kill herself, she would never do that to me and Dad," Mrs. Kester says. "I was living on that promise." A six-word suicide note that police found and later gave to the Kester family offered some comfort, but no explanation. Experts contend that, after a suicide, it is folly to ask what provoked it, to look for a single reason, a Suicide Spark. "There isn't one cause of suicide," Jacobs says. Instead, the final act is usually preceded by a series of personal losses or failures. Those losses can seem overwhelming to a person whose mind is altered by an underlying condition: schizophrenia, drug abuse or depression. Any of those conditions can begin to fester at a very young age.

...Judy's depression, she later decided, began when she was a teenager. "(She) was a bit more sensitive about things," Peter says. "I'd tend to walk on eggshells around her, the way she reacted to a problem. To some extent, she would . . . blow it out of proportion." She chastised brothers and sisters who broke family rules. By all accounts, she was a "goody-goody." As Judy walked home one day, she found a \$20 bill near the driveway. She asked a neighbor if it was his. He swiftly claimed it.

By April 1993, she took a new job. This one was at the opposite end of the life cycle, in an elder care center. She had the night shift. Exhausted, Judy would sometimes fall asleep while driving, sending her blue Ford Escort careening off the road. "That poor car, it took a beating," Mrs. Kester says. None of the accidents was life threatening. In fact, Judy's major auto problem was running out of gas. She got a plastic tank, kept in the car trunk for emergencies.

She switched jobs in 1994, joining the 75-person staff of Bonham Nursing Center near Stillwater. She was her own night supervisor, assigned to a newly opened wing. The commute was short. She seemed happy. As owner James Bonham and Judy walked the corridor one day, she abruptly stopped and pointed. "There was a Bible verse on the bulletin board," Bonham says. "(Judy) said, 'When I came in (the first day) and saw that I knew I came to the right place.' "And I said, you surely did."

At home, however, Judy was becoming increasingly troubled. "Even with my mother around, I don't think (Judy) could unload all her thoughts," says older brother James Kester, 41, of Frankfort, Ind. "As a married person, you have the advantage of being able to unload. You just don't have that as a single person." Judy, still bothered by pains, feared she had cancer. She stewed privately each time a Bonham Nursing Home patient died. "A lot of times when Judy was depressed, she would pour her heart out to me," says Sandra Michael, 50, a church friend and singing partner. "She called me a couple times late, late at night. That scared me."

Judy began reading self-help books: "How to Win Over Depression" and "Happiness is a Choice." She complained that her phone rang but when she answered, no one would talk. She referred to it as "the mystery caller." "(Judy) was calling out for help quite often," Mrs. Kester says. "Whether we didn't realize the seriousness of it, or what, maybe the helplessness of not

knowing how to handle the situation." Days before her death, Judy phoned a therapist. Her journal entry read: When I got off the phone I was so thrilled, I said YES! Thank you Lord! There's hope down the road.

But by Sunday night, Judy was distraught. Her mother prayed with her, reassured her. Tomorrow they would go to Williamsport together to get help. It was a sleepless night. Sometime after feeding her cat, Judy slipped out of the trailer. At 7:26 a.m. Monday, Shickshinny's police chief got a complaint: a carcass blocking the road. Probably a dead deer, thought Larry Williams. He grabbed a coat, prepared for a numbing cold and headed up to the old cottage by the cemetery. "As I got a little closer," Williams says, "I could tell it was too big for a deer."

He knelt by Judy, waiting for an ambulance. "With that type of trauma," a medic later said, "there's not much you can do." From Berwick Hospital, Judy was airlifted to Lehigh Valley Hospital's burn unit. Meanwhile, Mrs. Kester was on the telephone trying to reach her daughter. She left a message on the answering machine: Judy, let me know when you're ready to go. Shall I drive, or do you want to?

Rev. Kester checked the thermometer -- minus 9 degrees. He walked into the living room where a police scanner squawked. "It just didn't make sense," he said later, "that there would be a burn victim at Pine Hill Cemetery on the coldest morning of the year." The Kesters got the call at 8:30 a.m. It began to snow as Rev. and Mrs. Kester rode toward Judy's bedside in Allentown. Looking into the whiteness, Mrs. Kester remarked how similar this was to the blizzard of '58 -- the day of Judy's birth.

Burn center nurses encouraged the Kester family to talk to Judy. Her pulse changed at the sound of familiar voices, they said. Debbie and younger sister Ruth Campbell, 31, of Silver Spring, Md., decided to sing the duet "In the Garden." They stumbled on lyrics and began giggling. Instantly, they were both horrified. The next moment, they realized: It's what Judy would do. And so they laughed one last time with their beloved sister. Doctors would later explain that Judy's injuries were "basically unsurvivable." They advised removing life support. "We were all in agreement that she would be much happier where she was headed," Ruth says. "And there was really no hope."

Judy was pronounced dead at 12:45 a.m. Tuesday, Feb. 7. Rev. and Mrs. Kester embraced. One was overheard to say, "Our little snowball is dead." On the day of Judy's memorial service, the thermometer crept toward 40 degrees. The snow in Pine Hill Cemetery melted and ran down Furnace Street. Mourners entering Shickshinny's Bible Baptist Church took care not to get their feet wet. Inside, the spirit was upbeat. "We sang songs of victory," says Brenda Yapple, 35, one of Judy's closest friends and a Bonham Nursing Center worker. "(Judy's) family, I think, comforted us more than we comforted them. You could see that they hurt, but there was a peace about them."

7. Infant's mother testifies as Tampa boy, 12, stands trial in Georgia death (ZOLOFT)

By Alexandra Zayas, Times Staff Writer
In Print: Thursday, December 10, 2009

MARIETTA, Ga. On the Fourth of July, Brittiany Young returned to her car in a Target parking lot and put it in reverse. That's when she noticed the swollen mouth of her 5-week-old daughter, Millan.

Young put the car in park and turned to her cousin, a 12-year-old Tampa boy she had left alone with the baby.

"What did you do?" she asked. "What did you do to her?"

The mother testified Wednesday morning in a Cobb County, Ga., courtroom, where the Tampa boy faces charges of felony murder and cruelty to children. He has pleaded not guilty. Juvenile Court Judge A. Gregory Poole will decide the case without a jury.

The unidentified boy a court order keeps his name secret was visiting relatives July 4 outside Atlanta when his cousin stopped at the Target to pick up food for a picnic. According to court testimony, the 22-year-old mother left the keys in the ignition and the air conditioning on as she shopped at the store for 18 minutes. When Young returned, the boy was playing on his cell phone in the back seat. The radio was turned louder. And the infant was not responsive.

The baby girl was taken off life support the next day. A medical examiner found multiple skull fractures and ruled the cause of death blunt force trauma to the head.

The boy has remained in Georgia since July, first locked up in a juvenile detention center, then transferred to a secure group home.

Authorities said nothing specific about how they think the baby died until Wednesday morning.

"Something so horrific happened that pictures don't do it justice," prosecutor Eleanor Odom said in her opening statement. "That child's head was bashed in."

The boy's attorney, Derek Wright, had another word to describe the prosecution's case: "Impossible."

He said prosecutors would not be able to provide a scenario showing exactly what act of violence befell the baby no weapon, no points of impact in the car.

By Wednesday night, they still had not.

• • •

In the courtroom, the sixth-grader wore a gold suit like the one he wore to his elementary school graduation.

When his mother, his father and his great-aunt cried when the baby's mother cried he remained composed.

But emergency responders who first arrived at the scene testified that they saw him pacing and sobbing. They noted a different, more calm reaction from the mother. Paramedic Pierce Summers saw her later at the hospital.

"For someone that had had a child in that circumstance, it was surprising," he said, "like she was kind of lost in a fog."

Young described what her baby looked like in the car: eyes swollen and hard to the touch; blood on her mouth or nose; limp.

On July 5, the baby girl was deemed brain dead and taken off life support. The prosecutor asked the mother, "Were you there when Millan died?"

She paused to wipe tears. Then, she said, "yes."

After the judge ordered a break and the infant's mother left the stand, the boy burst into tears. He stood up, turned around and looked at his mother, who stood up from a bench and kissed his forehead.

• • •

For much of the day and into the night, the prosecution focused on three videotaped interviews the boy gave detectives.

The third was the subject of an hourlong debate. The defense fought hard to have it suppressed, saying the boy was forced to give incriminating statements.

During the first, the boy told detectives what he told the baby's mother: The baby began to cry, so he tried to give her a pacifier. She spit it out, so he tried to give her a bottle of water. She kept screaming, and was scratching her face. He turned the radio loud, and it appeared she went to sleep.

The boy's story didn't stray far from his original account in his second interview, which he gave the day after the baby was pronounced dead.

"If you accidentally hurt Millan, would you tell us?" the detective asked.

"Yes," the boy said. "I didn't accidentally hurt her. . . . I don't want to hurt a baby."

But a couple of hours after he gave that interview while their entire family was gathered at the baby's mother's house the boy's mother, Camille Curtis, brought him back to speak with police. This time, she was crying. She said he had told her something.

"It was just an accident," Curtis said. "He said he was scared. I asked him. He told me. He thought I was going to be mad."

Detectives asked the boy if he wanted to talk. The boy shook his head.

While the boy continued to refuse, Curtis spoke to police when he was out of the room. She told them **the boy was in counseling, that he had been fighting at school, that he had been prescribed Zoloft and a mood stabilizing medicine.** Then, Curtis provided a tearful account of what he said happened.

She said he told her the baby started choking when he tried to give her the bottle. He lifted her to his chest to burp her, and she fell out of his hands.

The boy told the baby's mother he was sorry, Curtis said.

At that point in the videotape, the police told her that this story didn't match the injuries. The video shows her pleading with her son to tell the police the truth, that he wouldn't be allowed to go home until he did.

He tells her he wiped the baby's blood with a blanket, and that he accidentally hit her with his elbow while trying to pick her up off the floor.

Just before midnight on the videotape, when it appeared the boy was about to talk, the judge stopped the tape.

"I find this to be inherently unfair," the judge said. "This child is so scared . . . literally in a corner. His mother is pressuring him. How many times does the kid say he doesn't want to talk?"

With that, the judge struck the entire third interview from the record. None of it will factor into the decision he will make this week.

The trial continues today.

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8. Suicide ruling remains in Colo. restaurateur's Port Chester death after toxicology results (ZOLOFT)

By Leslie Korngold • lkorngol@lohud.com • August 7, 2009

Text Size: Normal | Large | Larger

PORT CHESTER - Toxicology results on Chris Corna released this week do not change the Westchester medical examiner's conclusion that the popular Colorado restaurateur's death was a suicide, but police are not closing their investigation.

The car Chris Corna of Steamboat Springs was driving very early May 18 crashed into a bridge abutment after he slit his throat, the medical examiner said. A bloodied kitchen knife was found in the car. Either trauma was enough to kill him, Medical Examiner Millard Hyland said at that time.

The initial finding of suicide elicited numerous e-mails and calls to The Journal News and Port Chester police from family and friends of the Steamboat Springs businessman saying it was not possible. He was on the East Coast having just proposed to a Greenwich woman and was doing well financially.

Hyland said today that toxicology tests found appropriate amounts of a medicine, a tranquilizer used to treat anxiety, were in Corna's system. The tranquilizer, sertraline, he said, is used in Zoloft.

The "quantities are not over the top for someone taking it regularly," the medical examiner said.

Hyland did not know if Corna was on the medication regularly. But even if it had been administered just this one time, it was still not enough to kill Corna and "it would be very difficult to attribute suicidal tendencies to the drug," Hyland said.

There was no alcohol in Corna's system, and the only other chemical present was a byproduct of the breakdown of sertraline, Hyland explained.

Port Chester police have been investigating the curious accident and wanted to see the toxicology report. Today, police said they were continuing their investigation into the circumstances of the death but would not elaborate.

9. Innocents betrayed by a mum (ZOLOFT)

Herald Sun

Shelley Hadfield

May 23, 2008 12:00am

"DEAR Mum, I love you because your funny, your butifull and I like you the way you are . . . and the great things you do."

Like most nine-year-olds, Matthew Fitchett adored his mother. On September 5, 2006, he wrote the innocent note that was left on his parents' bedside table near a photo of him with his big brother Thomas.

A day later, Matthew struggled as the woman he loved more than any other -- the one who was supposed to protect him -- murdered him.

Unlike Matthew, 11-year-old Thomas didn't struggle when his mother used a sock to strangle him.

A qualified nurse, Donna Fitchett first plied the boys with a cocktail of drugs about 10am, telling them they were going on an exciting trip and they needed to take some travel medication.

But Matthew had begun to wake by the time she got to him and he struggled against her as she suffocated him -- with Fitchett taking a break only to put the family rottweiler Gemma outside when it tried to stop her.

Once they were dead, she cleaned and changed the boys "so nobody would think they weren't well looked after".

It's hard to know how she filled in the rest of her day. She says she never planned to be still alive when her husband arrived home about 6.30pm.

When David Fitchett walked in the door, the house was dark and his wife was in her bra and underpants. She staggered around and was unsteady on her feet, continuously dropping and picking up some A4 sheets of paper.

Mr Fitchett tried to help her but she kept telling him to leave her alone. She told him the children were at a friend's place and asked him to ring her sister "because I need to know they're OK".

"She walked up the hallway and I just heard this loud crash and I thought she's fallen over, something has gone wrong. So I've walked up the hallway to find her having fallen into the table just inside the bedroom door," Mr Fitchett said.

He went to help her, turning on the bedroom light only to find Thomas lying "as white as a sheet" on the bed.

"I think my wife killed my children," Mr Fitchett told a triple-0 operator in a frantic call moments later.

Later Donna Fitchett told emergency services workers who tried to treat her self-inflicted wounds that her husband had come home too early. "Just leave me alone. Why can't you just let me die? I don't want to go to hospital, I killed my boys," she said.

Donna Fitchett suffered post-natal depression with both her sons and had been taking anti-depressant Zoloft for four years. She had been seeing psychologist Patra Antonis for 15 months for marital difficulties.

Two weeks before murdering her children, Fitchett had a phone consultation with her psychologist because one of the boys had stolen strawberries meant for a family meal.

"Donna was very distressed about what that may have meant for the family, that the child would do this and deprive the others, that is, the not sharing of the strawberries with the remainder of the family," Ms Antonis said.

Donna Fitchett had firm views on parenting. She read books such as Parenting from the Inside Out and believed people were products of the parenting they received.

One of her sisters, Susan Buckley, described her as a loving, kind and compassionate mother who did everything for her boys.

"She went everywhere with them, taught them everything. She rarely let them out of her sight," Ms Buckley said.

But Fitchett believed her husband didn't love the children and even had a falling out with another of her sisters, Louise Mitchell, over her views on parenting skills.

"(T)here was an incident where a friend of mine, a male friend who was a single parent, had allowed his children to sort out a fight, a physical fight, and I said well, he allowed that to happen because he thought that boys will be boys and they will sort that out," Ms Mitchell said.

"She said that that was child abuse and that it should be reported -- and this man was a very loving father -- but in her eyes it was child abuse and she said that I needed counselling and I was angry," Ms Mitchell said.

"We sort of had a very big argument and she was very irrational."

At the time, Fitchett was reading books on personalities, conspiracies, myths and legends. The day before the murders, she told Louise that the Howard government had put Martin Bryant up to the Port Arthur massacre and that a former BHP employee killed Harold Holt.

She was "just a shattered mess of a person that I knew", Ms Mitchell said.

Fitchett had told her husband on the Friday before the murder that, after 12 years of marriage she was leaving him and taking the boys with her.

She told him he was a passive-aggressive person, he was not communicating with her in the way she needed him to, he couldn't care for the children and she just couldn't live with him any more.

In his evidence, Mr Fitchett recalled that on the Saturday night she told him: "The boys are really looking forward to Father's Day and you'd better make sure you enjoy it because it's the last one that you'll have with them."

Ms Fitchett was busy that weekend as she went on a cleaning frenzy. She filled five garbage bags with the boys' clothes. She blacked out the faces of her parents and father-in-law in a photo and gave away a coin box and jewellery.

Their marriage certificate was later found sitting on a garbage bag on the back veranda of the family's Balwyn North home.

Mr Fitchett, meanwhile, took the boys bowling for Father's Day. They had a terrific time. By that time, Donna Fitchett claims something snapped.

Dr Deborah Leach said: "She described wanting to keep her children safe from abuse and pain and she was not able to protect them."

Donna Fitchett kept Thomas and Matthew home from school on the Monday. That night -- the night before she murdered them -- she visited her sister, Louise Mitchell.

Donna Fitchett was upset because Thomas had decided that if his parents separated he wanted to stay with Daddy.

At 5.37am the next day, Donna Fitchett was up and on the computer, sending an email to two of her sisters, Susan Buckley and Maree Ryan.

"My darling Maree," she wrote at 5.45am. "I'm sorry I won't be joining you for Christmas this year, I'll be there in spirit."

Prosecutors say it was hours after Matthew and Thomas were dead that Donna Fitchett took Rohypnol, and it wasn't until Mr Fitchett got home that she slashed at her wrists.

It was, the prosecution said, premeditated and planned to the most minute detail. She had clearly been making preparations since the Friday.

What must she have thought when Matthew gave her that childlike note of love?

Whatever she thought, when David Fitchett discovered his sons were dead, it still sat on the bedside table just near Thomas's body -- a piece of paper engraved forever with her callousness.

10. Cops: Man stabbed wife, then set himself on fire (PROZAC)

Boston Herald

BEVERLY FORD

3 May 1994

Despondent over a pending divorce, a troubled Medway father smashed his way into his estranged wife's home, stabbed her three times and set fire to himself in a failed murder/suicide attempt early yesterday morning, Medway Police said.

Glen T. Mortimer, 35, a manager at Federal Express in Randolph, was listed in critical condition at UMass Medical Center in Worcester after rescuers pulled him semi-conscious from his estranged wife's burning Howe Street home.

Mortimer's 31-year-old wife, Kathleen, was in good condition at the same hospital undergoing treatment for stab wounds to her back.

The couple's two children, Allison, 4, and Kaitlyn, 6, were in their bedrooms at the time of the attack and were not injured, police said. They were being cared for by friends yesterday.

Police were called to the couple's Cape-style home at 9 Howe St. around 2 a.m. yesterday after Mortimer allegedly smashed through a rear sliding glass door with a hammer and attacked his wife in an upstairs bedroom.

Two friends who were staying at the house to provide protection for Kathleen Mortimer escaped to neighbors' homes shortly before the stabbing and called police.

The attack on Kathleen Mortimer came 12 days after she filed divorce papers against her husband of nine years.

Court records show that Kathleen Mortimer filed for divorce citing irretrievable breakdown of the marriage and was granted a restraining order barring her husband from physically abusing her.

She also was granted custody of the couple's two children and \$1,300 per month in child support.

In an affidavit filed in support of that restraining order, Kathleen Mortimer said her husband had been despondent and irrational in recent weeks and **had tried to throw himself out a second-floor window on March 26 while under the influence of alcohol and Prozac, which he was taking to treat his depression.**

"He kept banging his head against the door crying for help," Kathleen Mortimer wrote. "The police came and he was taken to Westwood Lodge in an ambulance. His blood alcohol level was .246," nearly 2 1/2 times the legal limit for drunk driving.

A psychiatrist who examined her husband at the time later told Kathleen Mortimer that "Glen is a loaded gun and I am the trigger," she wrote.

Neighbors, however, said Glen Mortimer appeared to be "the nicest person in the world" who doted lovingly on his wife and children. "I can't believe he'd do something like this," said one shocked neighbor. "He seemed to love his family so much."

11. MAN LOSES BID TO VISIT CHILDREN JAILED ON CHARGES OF ATTACKING FAMILY WITH DRAIN CLEANER (PROZAC)

Pittsburgh Post-Gazette (PA)

December 28, 1994

Author: JIM MCKINNON, POST-GAZETTE STAFF WRITER

A Washington County man charged with throwing a bucket of corrosive drain cleaner on his wife and children yesterday lost his bid to visit his children.

Washington County Common Pleas Judge Debbie O'Dell Seneca denied John Stasko Jr.'s request to visit his three children, Heather, 11, John III, 9, and Steven, 4. The youngest boy was not hit by the chemical, which police said contained sulfuric acid.

Stasko, 42, is a former convict who served 17 years in prison for the 1975 stabbing death of Bernadette Demeter, 20, a former girlfriend who wanted to end their relationship.

He was released from prison in 1992 and married Susan Stasko. Later, she too wanted to end the relationship. On March 17, when Susan Stasko rebuked his attempts to persuade her to stay with him, Stasko threw a bucket of drain cleaner on her while she was playing with her children in their Coal Center home.

The fluid caused third-degree burns to Susan Stasko's face, back, legs and an arm, and it has caused blindness in one eye. Susan Stasko spent 66 days in the burn unit at Mercy Hospital.

John Stasko is being held in the Washington County Jail on charges of attempted homicide, aggravated **assault** , reckless endangerment and endangering the welfare of children.

He had petitioned Washington County Common Pleas Court for visitation rights. At a hearing yesterday Seneca heard testimony from Dr. Timothy Landis, a psychiatrist who examined the children on behalf of Susan Stasko.

While the children are recovering from the physical scars caused by the drain cleaner, Landis said, it could be six months before they overcome the emotional trauma. Then they may be able to visit their father without any further harmful emotional affects.

The children did not testify yesterday. But at the Dec. 14 session, Seneca spoke with them in her chambers and considered their responses in her ruling yesterday, said a spokeswoman in her office.

Seneca said two of the children told her that they wanted to see their father. Heather said her mother would have to be present if that happened.

Dr. Timothy Landis, a University of Pittsburgh psychiatrist who interviewed the children, said John told him that seeing his father would make him "too sad."

John Stasko is scheduled for trial Feb. 6 on the criminal charges before Judge Thomas D. Gladden, who presided and sentenced Stasko in the 1975 homicide.

Stasko has testified that he suffers from depression and that since June, he had been prescribed Prozac as part of his treatment.

Stasko, through the Washington County public defender's office, has filed notice that he plans a defense claiming insanity or infirmity, said Assistant District Attorney Paul Petro.

Seneca said she ruled against the visits in part because the children could be witnesses at the trial. She said she is also concerned about Stasko's statement that he has been depressed recently.

Stasko said he will continue to seek custody of the children as his trial date approaches. He last saw them 10 months ago.

Susan Stasko is awaiting extensive plastic surgery on her face. She also has testified that she has to be fitted with a glass eye because Stasko tried to gouge her eye out while he beat her after dousing her with the drain cleaner. She opposes any visitation for John Stasko.

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12. DEPRESSED MOM ATTACKS DAUGHTERS WITH HEDGE-CLIPPERS: (UNSPECIFIED ANTIDEPRESSANT)

By Snejana Farberov DailyMail

PUBLISHED:10 July 2013

'I just wanted us all to be together': Chilling words of crazed mother-of-two 'who attacked daughter, 9, with electric HEDGE CLIPPERS and nearly severed her thumb before trying to commit suicide'

- Maureen Mullin, 39, faces attempted murder and assault charges
- Daughter, 9, suffered severe cuts but is expected to recover; her 5-year-old sister was unharmed
- Anthony Mullin, girls' father, was able to stop bloody attack by unplugging gardening tool and holding wife in a bear hug
- **Mrs Mullin has been taking medication for depression**

A Massachusetts woman is facing an attempted murder charge after police say she has attacked her 9-year-old daughter with a pair of electric hedge clippers, nearly severing her thumb.

Both the mother and the girl were hospitalized with serious but non-life threatening injuries following the incident that took place in the family's Westwood home early Monday morning.

Chief Jeff Silva said the 9-year-old's father stepped in to stop the attack reported at about 5am by the young victim, who told police that her mother was trying to kill herself. The couple's younger child who was in the home was unharmed.

Maureen Mullin, 39, was ordered held without bail pending a dangerousness hearing at an arraignment on charges including of attempted murder, assault and battery on a child and mayhem at her bedside at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston on Monday.

Police received a call at around 4.51am Monday from a young girl reporting a domestic disturbance at her home at 126 Pond Street in Westwood. When officers arrived at the house, they discovered that Maureen Mullin had attacked her 9-year-old daughter with a gardening tool. Both the mother and daughter sustained serious injuries and were taken to area hospitals for treatment.

An arrest report cited by the Boston Globe painted a horrific scene inside the Mullins' residence, with blood staining the walls, floor and bedding of the 9-year-old's bedroom and other rooms upstairs.

Police have credited the actions of Mullin's husband with saving his daughter from the brutal attack launched by his wife. Anthony Mullin, 39, told investigators that he was awakened just before 5am by the screams of his two daughters, ages 9 and 5, coming from a bedroom. Moments later, he heard one of his children say, 'Why are you doing this, mommy?'

According to the arrest report, Mr Mullin also heard the sound of a machine running behind a locked door. The father quickly jumped into action, forcing his way into the room, only to discover his wife holding a hedge trimmer next to the face of their 9-year-old child.

An orange extension cord ran from the wall to the gardening tool, so the 39-year-old man quickly unplugged it before wrestling the trimmer from his wife's hand.

The report states that Anthony Mullin then encircled his wife in a bear hug and led her downstairs into the living room.

Heroic actions: Anthony Mullin, the suspect's husband, heard his daughters screaming and was able to force the clippers out of his wife's hand

Mr Mullin said that his wife has been taking medication for depression The couple's 5-year-old daughter escaped the gruesome ordeal unharmed, but her older sister sustained injuries to her hand, face and neck. The 9-year-old suffered a severe laceration to her thumb, which was described in the arrest report as a 'near amputation.' She was taken to Boston Children's Hospital.

Responding officers found both the girl and her mother covered in blood. The woman, still in her husband's embrace, was heard repeatedly saying, 'I just wanted us all to be together.'

According to Mr Mullin, before police arrived, his wife grabbed a kitchen knife and threatened to stab him and take her own life. Police have yet to determine the motive behind the attack, but Mr Mullin said that his wife has been taking medication for depression and had an appointment for an unspecified mental health issue.

The family's neighbors in Westwood were stunned by the sudden outbreak of violence in the quiet community, describing the couple and their girls as seemingly happy and friendly.