

Norton man held in murder

Step-son will appear in court next Friday

By Veronica Monier
The Norton Telegram

A 20-year old Norton man was charged with first-degree murder Tuesday afternoon for the killing of his step-father.

Jimmy D. Williams was charged with beating Billy Masden to death with a claw hammer and a baseball bat on Saturday or early Sunday morning. Williams was being held on probable cause at the Norton County Jail with a \$500,000 bond until charges were filed.

The county hopes to hold the trial in Norton, instead of requesting a change of venue, said deputy County Attorney Karen Griffiths Tuesday night. She said at Tuesday's first appearance, David Baumgartner, a Phillipsburg lawyer, was assigned to take Williams' case. Baumgartner, said Tuesday night he had been appointed around 5 p.m. and couldn't make any comments yet.

Griffiths said her office hadn't yet received the autopsy report, and wouldn't comment on whether there were witnesses to the crime.

She said the next step is a preliminary hearing, which has been set for 2 p.m. next Friday, before Magistrate Judge Deb Anderson. Griffiths said at the preliminary hearing, Anderson will be shown the evidence against Williams. If she feels there is probable cause to believe that Williams committed the crime, then she will bind him over to the District Court, where Judge Bill Elliott will take over. If there isn't evidence to support probable cause, the charges could be dropped.

Gary Williams, Jimmy's father, said he was shocked when he found out how Masden was killed.

"We were supposed to go to his first hearing, but didn't find out when it was until too late," he said. "When we found out how Bill was killed, we were stunned."

He said both his son and Masden had been drinking, and when they were drunk, got into an argument when went too far.

"It's hard to accept," Williams said. "I think it was more in self defense and I don't think the murder charge will stick."

Williams said when he talked to his son, Jimmy told him was trying to hang in there, but was pretty scared. He said he asked him what happened that night.

"Jimmy was here until about 10 p.m. before he went home to his girlfriend's apartment," he said. "He said he went over to Bill's to have another drink and then they went to the club, but since Jimmy can't drink there, they went back to Bill's. Then something was said and things got out of hand."

Williams said his son could go from being the nicest person to mean and violent when drinking, and so could Masden. He said he saw them like that more than once.

Jimmy William's neighbor, Dave Ashley, said he had only just found out who his neighbor was, but he seemed like a very nice young man.

"We only met a couple of times," said Ashley. "He was always very pleasant whenever I talked to him, but evidently, he had some problems somewhere."

corrections

In the city commission story in the Friday, May 30, edition of *The Goodland Star-New*, the name of the manager of the new convenience store at Eighth and Caldwell was given as Carolyn Smith. Her name is Colleen Smith. This was a reporting error.

☆☆☆☆☆
In the Tuesday, June 6, edition, a caption about the crew on the roof of the Carnegie Art Center on Page 1, said they were from Roofmasters of Colby. The crew is from the Roofmaster company of North Platte, Neb. This was a reporting error.

☆☆☆☆☆
The Goodland Star-News will correct any mistake or misunderstanding in a news story. Please call our office at (785) 899-2338 to report errors. We believe that news should be fair and factual. We want to keep an accurate record and appreciate you calling to our attention any failure to live up to this standard.



Junior band, singers blow 'right notes'

"Music that strikes the right note" was the theme for the Grant Junior High spring music program May 22 at the high school auditorium. Members of the seventh- and eighth-grade bands and choirs performed. Jessica Lu (left) was on flute for the Eighth grade band while Josiah Goodley (above) was one of the trumpet players. Josh Cech (below) was a soloist for the eighth-grade choir.

Photos by Liz West
The Goodland Star-News



Norton County recalls 'crazed husband' of 1933

Possibly the last murder cases in Norton County was in 1933, when a "crazed man" shot a farmer and his son. There may be other incidents that have been forgotten, but this one was pointed out by long-time residents.

On Aug. 3, 1933, a headline in *The Norcatur Centennial* read "Farmer and son shot by enraged husband — son dead, father fatally wounded, crazed murderer takes own life as armed men cut off escape."

According to *The Centennial*, Robert McCune, 79, and his son, Frank, 56, were at their farm, one mile east of Norcatur, when they were shot by Wilfred Lund. Frank was shot twice in the shoulder. One bullet severed the jugular vein and he died almost instantly. Robert was

also shot twice, but told the story.

Lund, crazed by jealousy because of estrangement from his wife who had served him with divorce papers a few days before the attack, went to the McCune farm because Mrs. Lund, formerly Miss June Paget of Norcatur, was staying there, caring for Miss Ida McCune.

The article said after shooting the McCunes, Lund circled the house several times, but "being unable to shoot his wife (presumably)," he hid in the shed. When neighbors arrived with guns after being phoned by June Lund, he realized he was being hemmed in and tried to escape across a pasture.

When he realized he wasn't going to be able to get away, Lund killed himself by placing his 32-caliber gun to his chest and firing.

Hospital hopes plan will draw cash

By Sharon Corcoran
The Goodland Star-News

After losing nearly \$700,000 last year and over \$200,000 so far this year, the Goodland Regional Medical Center board decided a new classification may be the answer to the hospital's budget quandaries.

The hospital board voted Monday to seek critical access status, a move which hopefully will bring in more money from federal insurance programs such as Medicare.

Rural facilities can be classified as critical access hospitals if they meet government criteria and are then eligible to be reimbursed at a higher rate by Medicare, the federal program which covers senior citizens. The Goodland hospital is now an acute care hospital and is reimbursed about 80 percent of what Medicare deems to be the cost of services based on a patient's diagnosis.

Roger Johnson of the consulting firm Wendling, Noe, Nelson and Johnson did an audit for the hospital and a comparison of recent reimbursements from Medicare compared to anticipated reimbursements as a critical access hospital. He recommended seeking critical access status.

Changing to critical access status should increase the net patient service revenue by \$686,000, Johnson said, from \$8 million to \$8.7 million. As a critical access hospital with a hospital-based rural health clinic, he said, it would go to almost \$10 million.

The hospital would not pocket all the additional money, since with the clinic, the expenses would go up as well. With the clinic included, the wages and salaries would go up from \$3,632,492 to \$4,485,986 to include the clinic employees and the employee benefits would go up from \$952,923 to \$1,118,095.

Critical access status would have a significant effect, Johnson said, and having the clinic won't hurt.

Johnson said he didn't think the hospital's services would change with the critical access status.

"I don't anticipate you'll do anything different than you're doing now," he said.

Administrator Jay Jolly concurred. Critical access is still acute

care, he told the board. It's a special classification for small hospitals, Jolly said, that allows rural hospitals to receive cost-based reimbursement from Medicare.

The diagnosis-related group charges Medicare currently uses to reimburse the hospital are based on the assumption, Jolly said, that with enough patients, the gains and losses would even out. Even though you lose on some patients, he said, you come out ahead on others. But the Goodland hospital doesn't see enough patients to come out ahead, Jolly said.

The rules for critical access, Jolly said, requires that the hospital have no more than 15 acute patients at any time and 25 overall, including swing bed patients.

On the busiest day since January of last year, he said, the hospital had 13 acute care patients. Even going back to October of 2001, he said, the hospital has never had more than 13 acute care patients.

Another requirement, Jolly said, is that the average length of hospital stays is not supposed to be over four days. The average now, he said, is three.

Since it's an average, he said, some patients will be able to stay longer than four days. Other patients will have shorter stays, he said, so the average will stay below four.

And the hospital will need to have an agreement with another hospital, Jolly said, to transfer patients. Since the hospital is already transferring patients to Denver and to Hays when medically necessary, the administrator said the agreement should not be a problem.

Board member Pete Whalen asked if the change to critical access would restrict the type of procedure or services the hospital is allowed to offer. That has been evolving, Johnson said. It used to be more restrictive, but it's more lenient now.

The program has changed over the years, Jolly said.

Board member Doug Irvin asked why all rural hospitals wouldn't change to critical access. Johnson said most of them are.

Boardmember Lynn Hoelting asked if the hospital would have to change any by-laws.

Business After Hours

The Goodland Star-News
1205 Main Ave.
When: Friday June 13, 2003
Time: 5:30 to 7 p.m.
Sponsored by:
Goodland Chamber of Commerce and
The Goodland Star-News

Eddie Murphy
Daddy Day Care
PG: Language
www.goodlandnet.com/movies

Bring this AD to the theatre for \$1 OFF on a large popcorn & 2 med. drinks
EXP: 12/31/03

Fri. & Sat. 7:00 & 9:00
Sun. 1:30 & 7:00
Mon. - Thurs. 7:00

Sherman
1203 Main - Phone 899-6103

"Old Man Sunflower" sez there are 3 kinds of memory, Good, Bad and Convenient.

"My Banker is happy with SIGCO's new crop 'Act of God' confection sunflower contract. He said that I could net \$200/acre above direct costs! With the high production costs for corn, many ambitions are nipped in the Budget!"

Consider a confection sunflower contract with SIGCO Sun Products this year!

Mike Bretz or Lori Rietchek
Crop Production Team
Goodland, Kansas
1-800-742-9259 or 899-5607

The Goodland Star-News
1205 Main Ave. • Goodland, Kan. 67735 • 785-899-2338

The Goodland Star-News