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STATE OF WISCONSIN,

Plaintiff,

-vs-

William R. Schmidt  
D.O.B. 07/13/1970  
Oneida County Jail  
2000 East Winnebago  
Rhinelander, WI 54501,

Defendant.

DA Case No.: 2010ON001149

Assigned DA/ADA: Michael H. Bloom

Agency Case No.:

Court Case No.: \_\_\_\_\_

ATN:

**Criminal Complaint**

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Nancy Reklau, being first duly sworn, states that:

**Count 1: FIRST DEGREE INTENTIONAL HOMICIDE**

The above-named defendant on or about between June 12, 2010 and June 18, 2010, in the Town of Minocqua, Oneida County, Wisconsin, did cause the death of Lori J. Schmidt, with intent to kill that person, contrary to sec. 940.01(1)(a) Wis. Stats., a Class A Felony, and upon conviction shall be sentenced to imprisonment for life.

**PROBABLE CAUSE:**

Complainant is an officer with the Oneida County Sheriff's Department and bases this complaint upon the reports of Chief Andrew R. Gee, Lt. David J. Jaeger, Officer Paul Metzger and Officer Sonja Murray of the Minocqua Police Department, whose reports have been used in the past and found to be truthful and reliable.

Complaint is further based on the reports of Det. Sgt. Philip J. Newcomb of the Oneida County Sheriff's Department, Det. Sgt. Frank Tomlonovich of the Vilas County Sheriff's Department, Deputy Gary Zajkowski, Deputy Thomas Benning and Detective Mark Mancl of the Sheboygan County Sheriff's Department and Officer Latasha S. Moody-Paterno of the Chicago (Illinois) Police Department, whose reports are believed to be truthful and reliable in that they are sworn law enforcement officers whose reports have been prepared and kept in the normal course of the business of their respective departments.

Complaint is further based on the report of Dr. Susan Venuti of the Fond du Lac County medical Examiner's office, whose report is believed to be truthful and reliable in that it was prepared and kept in the normal course of the business of the Fond du Lac County Medical Examiner's Office.

Complaint is further based on the statements of Thomas P. Eckert, Jean A. Eckert, William H. Schmidt, Virginia S. Karstaedt, Lesia A. Oehldrich, Max Fritsche, Justin Wagner and Mary Alice Sowell, whose statements are believed to be truthful and reliable in that they are ordinary adult citizen witnesses with first hand knowledge of the matters reported.

Complaint is further based on the statements of the defendant, William R. Schmidt, whose statements are believed to be truthful and reliable in that they were given against his penal interest.

According to the report of Officer Murray, on Thursday June 17, 2010, at approximately 9:21 p.m., she met with Tom and Jean Eckert in the conference room at the Minocqua Police Department. The Eckerts were concerned because they had not heard from their daughter, Lori J. Schmidt, since Saturday June 12, 2010. The Eckerts informed Officer Murray that Lori was married to the defendant, William R. Schmidt, and that they had gotten married on February 12, 2010. Ms. Eckert stated that she usually spoke with Lori at least once a day. They stated that Lori worked at Menard's in Rhinelander, Wisconsin, and that Lori's days off were Saturday June 12 through Wednesday June 16. They stated that they had not heard from Lori during that time, which they felt was unusual. They contacted Menard's on the morning of June 17 and were informed that Lori was scheduled to work at 6:30 that morning, but that she had not reported to work and had not called. The Eckerts felt it was very unusual that Lori would not contact her place of employment to inform them she would miss work.

According to the report of Chief Gee, he arrived at the Minocqua Police Department and spoke with the Eckerts. Mr. Eckert stated that they had left voicemail messages for Lori daily since June 12. The Eckerts told Chief Gee that they had visited Lori's residence earlier that day and found that there were no vehicles at the residence. Her cell phone was on the counter, which was unusual, as they said that she always had her cell phone. Lori's three cats were in the residence without food or fresh water and the litter box was full. The Eckerts stated that this is unusual as Lori would never leave her cats as they are "her babies." The Eckerts told Chief Gee that they saw a note at the residence that the defendant had left for his parole agent, indicating that he would not be able to make an appointment with the parole agent.

According to the report of Chief Gee, the Eckerts contacted a neighbor, later identified as Max Fritsche, who stated that the shades to the house were drawn all week and there was the appearance that no one was home all week. Fritsche told the Eckerts that the truck normally driven by Lori's husband William (the defendant) had been in the driveway for most of the week, but was gone today for the first time.

According to the report of Chief Gee, the Eckerts expressed a great deal of concern for Lori's welfare. They stated that they know little of the defendant. Lori and the defendant had married in February and Lori had recently started to reveal that the defendant is not a good person. The Eckerts stated that they own the residence that Lori and the defendant live in and that Lori and the defendant do not pay rent.

According to the report of Chief Gee, he and Officer Murray went to Lori and the defendant's residence at 9425 Country Club Road in the Town of Minocqua, Oneida County, Wisconsin to perform a health and welfare check. The residence was completely dark. The officers entered the residence through a sliding glass door at the back of the house. The only movement and sound detected were by three cats that could be seen moving about the residence. The residence was generally neat in appearance. Upon arriving at the master

bedroom, Chief Gee could detect the odor of what he recognized, based on his training and experience, as a dead body in the room. He noted that the double bed appeared to be hastily made. He opened the closet door in the bedroom and immediately saw a bundled up white comforter stuffed into the closet. He could see a human arm coming out of the top of the bundle. The skin appeared mottled and was blackening. He noted the top of what appeared to be hair on a human head. He received no response from the person in the comforter. Due to the appearance of a deceased body, the officers exited the residence and it was determined that a search warrant should be obtained.

According to the report of Lt. Jaeger, he arrived at 9425 Country Club Road at approximately 11:22 p.m. on Thursday June 17, 2010. Lt. Jaeger and Officer Murray conducted a search of the property exterior to the residence. The only items of potential evidentiary value located were tire tracks in the granite driveway on the north side of the residence and a garden hose with both ends cut off and a scissors located on the south side of the residence.

According to the report of Det. Sgt. Newcomb of the Oneida County Sheriff's Department, he arrived at 9425 Country Club Road at approximately 12:00 a.m. on Friday June 18, 2010 and was briefed by Lt. Jaeger. At 1:15 a.m., Det. Sgt. Newcomb recovered a note which was on the exterior of the service entrance to the garage. The note was addressed to Rick Peterson, who is the defendant's parole agent, and appeared to be from the defendant. The note stated that the defendant had to go to work early and was not able to keep his home visit appointment with his Agent Peterson.

According to the report of Det. Sgt. Newcomb, he left 9425 Country Club Road at 1:30 a.m. and drove to the Minocqua Police Department to assist with the search warrant application. Det. Sgt. Newcomb returned to 9425 Country Club Road at approximately 2:30 a.m., where he met with other law enforcement officers and developed a plan for the investigation. During the search of the residence, Det. Sgt. Newcomb noted dark dried substances in various places that he believed was blood. The blood patterns were on the kitchen linoleum-type floor. There was also what appeared to be blood spatters on the vent area below the refrigerator door. The location of the blood spatter on the vent indicated the spatter would have occurred from a source close to the floor. Det. Sgt. Newcomb took photographs of a latent fingerprint which appeared to be left in blood on the handle of the refrigerator. There was also blood on the range control knob and on a cigarette butt on the floor in front of the kitchen sink. There were small bits of debris on the kitchen floor which made it appear the floor was not wiped down recently. Det. Sgt. Newcomb also saw blood stain patterns on the kitchen sink that showed diluted blood, as if someone washed bloody hands or items in the sink.

According to the report of Det. Sgt. Newcomb, he conducted a search of the spare bedroom in the residence and located a laundry basket in the west corner of the bedroom closet, which appeared to be full of soiled clothing of a male subject. As Det. Sgt. Newcomb searched through the clothing, he found a McDonald's uniform, a pair of socks, and other clothing, some of which appeared to be stained with blood.

According to the report of Det. Sgt. Newcomb, the floor in the master bathroom was free of debris and appeared to have been cleaned recently. Det. Sgt. Newcomb also saw blood stain patterns in the sink that showed diluted blood, as if someone washed bloody hands or items in the sink.

According to the report of Det. Sgt. Newcomb, he searched the master bedroom. Det. Sgt. Newcomb saw a human body, later identified as that of Lori J. Schmidt, wrapped in a white comforter and lying in the closet. Lori's body was lying in a position with her knees bent and her thighs and upper body lying back and to her left side. Her back was lying on a shoe rack. The left arm was out of the comforter. Det. Sgt. Newcomb could see that Lori's body was decomposing. Det. Sgt. Newcomb removed all the items from the master bedroom closet where Lori's body was lying. Det. Sgt. Newcomb recovered a woman's purse, in which he located miscellaneous change, an empty wallet, Lori's driver's license, tampons and candy.

According to the report of Det. Sgt. Newcomb, he and Oneida County Medical Examiner Traci England removed Lori's body from the closet and placed it in a body bag. Det. Sgt. Newcomb secured Lori's body in his vehicle at 6:45 a.m. on June 18, 2010. Det. Sgt. Newcomb and M.E. England transported Lori's body to the Fond du Lac County Medical Examiner's Office, arriving at 12:15 p.m. Det. Sgt. Newcomb attended an autopsy performed on Lori's body by Dr. Susan Venuti, which concluded at 4:30 p.m.

According to the report of Deputy Zajkowski of the Sheboygan County Sheriff's Department, at 11:50 p.m. on June 17, 2010, he was dispatched to the residence of Virginia S. Karstaedt, who is the mother of the defendant, at her residence in Sheboygan Falls in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin. Ms. Karstaedt told deputy Zajkowski that the defendant had shown up at her house unexpectedly on Wednesday afternoon June 16. She stated that the defendant acted weird the whole time. The defendant told her that he and Lori had been fighting and it had been really bad. He was afraid that they were going to get a divorce. Ms. Karstaedt said that the defendant arrived at her residence driving Lori's red Cobalt. The defendant told Ms. Karstaedt that Lori had told him to leave. He said that he couldn't leave in his truck, so she told him to take her car. The defendant stayed for dinner, but said he was going back to Minocqua for the evening. He left a short time after dinner. As the defendant left, Ms. Karstaedt said that he hugged her for a long time and kissed her.

According to the report of Det. Sgt. Tomlonovich of the Vilas County Sheriff's Department, at approximately 12:52 a.m. on June 18, 2010, he and Lt. Gerald Ritter of the Vilas County Sheriff's Department conducted an interview of William H. Schmidt, who is the father of the defendant, at his residence in St. Germain in Vilas County, Wisconsin. Mr. Schmidt told the officers that he last saw the defendant at approximately 8:30 a.m. on Thursday June 17. The defendant came to Mr. Schmidt's residence shortly before that asking to borrow money from his father, stating that he was planning on going to Sheboygan Falls to visit his mother—Mr. Schmidt's ex-wife, Virginia Karstaedt. Mr. Schmidt said he told the defendant that he did not have any money, but would put gas in the defendant's vehicle so that he could make the trip. They then went to the Citgo Station in St. Germain, where Mr. Schmidt paid for \$30.00 worth of gasoline for the defendant's vehicle, which Mr. Schmidt described as an older Toyota pickup truck that was gray in color. The defendant told his father that he had to be back on

Friday because he had to work. Mr. Schmidt said that the defendant works at McDonald's in Minocqua. After putting gas in the truck, the defendant left.

According to the report of Det. Sgt. Tomlonovich, Mr. Schmidt said that he did not know that anything was wrong until Lori's parents, the Eckerts, came to his residence looking for Lori in the late afternoon or early evening of June 17, at which time Mr. Schmidt learned that Lori was considered a missing person. According to the report of Det. Sgt. Tomlonovich, Mr. Schmidt said that, subsequent to the visit from Lori's parents, Mr. Schmidt began calling family members and friends in the Sheboygan Falls/Plymouth area inquiring about the defendant. Mr. Schmidt learned that the defendant had never arrived at his mother's residence, but that the defendant had been at the residence of a female named Lisa, having last been seen there at approximately 7:30 p.m. on June 17. At about that time, the defendant was reported to have left Lisa's residence, stating that he planned on returning to spend the night. However, to the best of Mr. Schmidt's knowledge, the defendant never returned to Lisa's residence.

According to the report of Deputy Zajkowski of the Sheboygan County Sheriff's Department, he made contact with Lesia A. Oehldrich at her residence in Sheboygan Falls in Sheboygan County, Wisconsin. Ms. Oehldrich stated that she had received a call from the defendant on Thursday June 17, 2010 at approximately 4:10 p.m. She had subsequent phone contact with the defendant at approximately 6:10 p.m. He asked to meet her at the McDonald's in Sheboygan Falls on Highway 32. Ms. Oehldrich met the defendant there at approximately 6:30 p.m. and they went back to her residence. They talked and caught up with each other's lives and he left at approximately 7:30 p.m., driving his truck. Ms. Oehldrich stated that when they had first spoken on the phone, the defendant had told her not to tell anybody that he was coming, as he wanted to talk to her first and then surprise everybody later.

According to the report of Chief Gee, on Friday June 18, 2010, he made contact with Parole Agent Rick Peterson. Agent Peterson indicated that he was last at the defendant's residence on June 17 for a scheduled 10:30 a.m. home visit with the defendant. Agent Peterson indicated that he arrived a little earlier than 10:30 a.m. He attempted contact at the residence and received no answer. Agent Peterson stated that he saw the note left for him on the garage door.

According to the report of Chief Gee, on Friday June 18, 2010 at approximately 12:45 p.m., he was informed that Lori's Cobalt vehicle had been located at 8075 LaFrenier court in the Town of Minocqua. Chief Gee responded to that location. Chief Gee observed the Cobalt parked in the driveway leading to the entry of a large brown pole building. A records check identified the owner of the property as George Grundy. Chief Gee and DCI Special Agent David P. Forsythe made contact with Mr. Grundy at his residence. Mr. Grundy confirmed that he and his wife are the sole owners of the property on which the Cobalt was parked. He stated that he had not given anyone permission to park their car in the driveway. He stated that he does not know why Lori Schmidt's car would be parked in the driveway.

According to the report of Chief Gee, an exterior view of the Cobalt identified a green garden hose piece that was rigged into the car in such a manner that it appeared that the purpose

may have been to expel exhaust into the passenger compartment. The Cobalt was subsequently transported directly to the crime lab in Wausau for evidence processing.

According to the report of Officer Metzger of the Minocqua Police Department, on Friday June 18, 2010, he made contact with Tom and Jean Eckert at their residence in Woodruff, Wisconsin. Mr. Eckert told Officer Metzger that, prior to Lori's marriage, in either January or February of 2010, Lori had transferred the deed to the residence at 9425 Country Club Road from her own name to her parents' names. Mr. Eckert indicated that he and Lori's mother had built and given the home to Lori sometime in the past and no one wanted to see Lori lose the home if the marriage were to end in divorce. Approximately two weeks prior to June 18, Lori had informed her parents that the defendant had been looking for the deed to the house. When the defendant found out that the house was no longer in Lori's name he became irate. According to Mr. Eckert, the defendant had been told that prior to his most recent discovery of the condition of the deed that the deed had been signed over to Mr. and Mrs. Eckert's names.

According to the report of Officer Metzger, on Saturday June 19, 2010, he made contact with Justin Wagner, the on-duty manager at the McDonald's in Minocqua. Mr. Wagner indicated that the defendant had started work at McDonald's on May 31, 2010 and had worked on June 4, June 8 and June 12. On June 12, the defendant had requested to leave early, saying it was his anniversary. According to Mr. Wagner, the defendant did not show up for his scheduled shift on Sunday June 13, nor did he show up for his scheduled shift on Wednesday June 16. The defendant did not call to excuse himself from these shifts. According to Mr. Wagner, the defendant had been fitting in well at McDonald's in the few shifts that he worked. According to Mr. Wagner, the defendant worked well with the other employees and had showed up on time for his shifts.

According to the report of Officer Moody-Paterno of the Chicago Police Department, on Monday June 21, 2010, she met with Mary Alice Sowell at Ms. Sowell's residence in Chicago, Illinois. Ms. Sowell had reported a vehicle theft and a possible person wanted. Ms. Sowell indicated that she and the defendant were pen pals while they both were incarcerated in Wisconsin and have remained friends over the past twelve years. The last time she had spoken with the defendant prior to recently was ten months ago. On Thursday June 17, 2010 she received a phone call from the defendant who indicated that he missed her and wanted to see her. During the conversation the defendant indicated that his vehicle, a 1993 Toyota pickup would not make it to Chicago and would she come and get him. Ms. Sowell agreed and drove to Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, on Highway 23 across from a McDonald's. She arrived there at approximately 11:00 p.m. The defendant left his vehicle at that location. Ms. Sowell indicated that after picking up the defendant she observed a gash on his right forearm approximately three inches deep surrounded by dried blood. When she questioned him about it, the defendant related that he was helping his dad when he was cut by a saw. The defendant stated that because he does not have insurance he was not going to go to the hospital for stitches. Ms. Sowell observed that the defendant did not have any change of clothes with him and when she questioned him, he indicated that he rushed out of the house and did not realize that he had left his luggage until he was already one hour away.

According to the report of Officer Moody-Paterno, Ms. Sowell indicated that, on Sunday June 20, 2010, she and the defendant visited the Horseshoe Casino in Indiana at approximately 3:00 p.m. and thereafter visited the Navy Pier in Chicago. Ms. Sowell indicated that, when she woke up on Monday June 21, 2010 at approximately 8:00 a.m., she discovered her house and car keys, her car, and \$400.00 in cash were missing. She stated that the defendant left her a note which read, "Be right back went to get u something very special you'll love it my love." The defendant left some clothes and a cell phone at Ms. Sowell's residence. Ms. Sowell related this information to a relative who searched the defendant on the internet and discovered that he was wanted for questioning out of Minocqua, Wisconsin. Ms. Sowell subsequently contacted the police.

According to the report of Chief Gee, on June 21, 2010 at approximately 12:45 p.m. he was informed that the Fond du Lac County Sheriff's Department had located the defendant's truck. Chief Gee contacted Lt. Duvenc, who informed him that they had unmarked cars watching the apparently unoccupied vehicle, which was parked on Peters Avenue two blocks from the McDonald's on Johnson Street (Highway 23).

According to the report of Chief Gee, on June 21, 2010 at approximately 5:00 p.m. he received a call from Virginia Karstaedt, the defendant's mother. Ms. Karstaedt stated that she received a call from Mary Alice Sowell. Ms. Karstaedt stated that she was told that the defendant had won some money at a casino. Ms. Karstaedt stated that Ms. Sowell told her that the defendant had a three to five inch gash on his arm that was infected and needed stitches. Ms. Sowell told Ms. Karstaedt that Ms. Sowell had been a nurse and that she had cleaned and bandaged the wound the best that she could. Ms. Karstaedt said that when she saw the defendant, he was wearing a long sleeved sweatshirt even though it was hot so she couldn't see his injury. Ms. Karstaedt stated that Ms. Sowell told her that the defendant claimed that he cut himself at his dad's with a saw. Ms. Karstaedt stated that that was a lie, as she had asked the defendant's father about the matter, and the defendant's father had denied that the defendant cut himself at his place.

According to the report of Detective Mancl, of the Sheboygan County Sheriff's Department, he interviewed the defendant's mother, Virginia Karstaedt, at the Sheboygan County Sheriff's Department on June 24, 2010. Ms. Karstaedt told him that, during the morning of June 24, the defendant called her collect and requested that she take him to St. Germain. Ms. Karstaedt declined and asked the defendant to come to her house to turn himself in. Ms. Karstaedt was able to talk him into coming to her house, agreeing that she would not call law enforcement until after he was there. About 20 minutes later, Ms. Karstaedt was standing outside with her husband and daughter Tina and they saw the defendant approaching the house on foot. They went inside and the defendant asked to take a shower before she called law enforcement, as he had not showered and been wearing the same clothes for a week. The defendant smoked a cigarette, and then took a shower, before Ms. Karstaedt contacted law enforcement. According to Detective Mancl's report, the Sheboygan County Sheriff's Department received the call at 9:27 a.m.

According to the report of Deputy Benning, of the Sheboygan County Sheriff's Department, on June 24, 2010, at 9:45 a.m., he was dispatched to W2852 CTH J, which is the residence of Virginia Karstaedt, the defendant's mother, in Sheboygan Falls, Wisconsin in reference to an individual turning himself in on a warrant. Upon arrival at the residence, Deputy Benning observed other officers handcuffing a male individual on the ground in front of the residence. Deputy Abel, of the Sheboygan County Sheriff's Department, asked Deputy Benning if he could transport the individual to the detention center. The individual was walked over to Deputy Benning's van. The individual was placed in rear of the van, which is a caged van, and seat belted in. The individual was later identified as the defendant, William R. Schmidt. Deputy Benning transported the defendant to the detention center, where the defendant was turned over to the correctional staff. The defendant had a wound on his left wrist area which was approximately two inches long and was scabbed over.

According to the report of Detective Mancl, he asked the defendant's mother, Ms. Karstaedt, if she had any conversation with the defendant while he was at her residence and she stated that he did admit to killing Lori, stating "I did kill her." Ms. Karstaedt described that he also told her that "she didn't suffer." The defendant told her that he did it "after she passed out." The defendant also told Ms. Karstaedt that he had stayed in the house with Lori until Wednesday (June 16). Ms. Karstaedt stated that she had a telephone conversation with Lori on Saturday June 12. Ms. Karstaedt stated that Lori asked her if she had given the defendant any money, as the defendant had money that Lori could not account for and Lori was inquiring about that. Ms. Karstaedt told Lori that she had given the defendant a total of \$170.00 during the past month or so. Ms. Karstaedt stated that the conversation occurred about 2:00 p.m. and that it seemed that Lori was already intoxicated. Ms. Karstaedt stated that, later that same day, she had received a call from the defendant, who asked that she not tell Lori that she had given the defendant money if Lori happened to ask. Ms. Karstaedt did not tell the defendant that she had already told Lori that she had given the defendant money.

According to the report of Detective Mancl, Ms. Karstaedt stated that she had received a call from the defendant about a week before that, and that the defendant told her that Lori was hiding her jewelry because she did not trust him. Ms. Karstaedt stated that the defendant expressed his unhappiness with the fact that Lori would not have sex with him and that Lori said she did not have to have sex with him just because they are married.

According to the report of Detective Mancl, Ms. Karstaedt stated that the defendant told her that, after he left Mary Sowell's house in Chicago, that he had driven to Detroit and ended up putting about 2,000 miles on Ms. Sowell's vehicle. According to the report of Det. Sgt. Newcomb of the Oneida County Sheriff's Department, during a search of Mary Sowell's 2001 Ford Escape, which was recovered in Sheboygan County, various receipts were located indicating transactions on June 20, 2010 in Chicago, Illinois, on June 21, 2010 in Jackson, Michigan, on June 22, 2010 in St. Ignace, Michigan, and on June 22, 2010 in Eagle River, Wisconsin.

According to the report of Detective Mancl, Ms. Karstaedt stated that the defendant disclosed to her that he had attempted to commit suicide on three different occasions, using three different methods. The defendant told her that he had attempted to cut himself on the arm.

The defendant also told her that he attempted to gas himself and possibly blow up the house in Minocqua by opening up the natural gas in the house, but that was also unsuccessful. The defendant also told Ms. Karstaedt that that he tried to asphyxiate himself by placing a hose in the exhaust of the car and then breathing the fumes out of the other end of the hose, but that was also unsuccessful.

An Autopsy Protocol, dated August 19, 2010, was prepared by Dr. Susan Venuti relative to the autopsy performed on Lori J. Schmidt's body on June 18, 2010. The Autopsy Protocol indicates that the cause of Lori's death was "Homicide by Unspecified Means."

Based on the foregoing, the complainant believes this complaint to be true and correct.

Subscribed and sworn to before me,  
and approved for filing on:

This \_\_\_\_\_ day of August, 2010.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Assistant) District Attorney

State Bar No. 1021464

\_\_\_\_\_  
Complainant

Nancy Reklau