

December 2009.....interesting cases handled by Wisconsin's death investigators

- In Outagamie County, a 65-year-old man who is a suspect in a homicide case has been released from custody, clearing the way for his deportation to Mexico. He was charged with stabbing his 48-year-old roommate in November 2006 after the decedent was accused of spreading rumors the other man was homosexual.
- In Dodge County, a 53-year-old man died after the SUV he was driving struck a farm tractor. Two men on the tractor were injured, one critically. That man later died.
- In Winnebago County, a 43-year-old man had charges refiled against him in a 2005 boating accident. Authorities feel the man was driving a boat while intoxicated; the boat crashed into the shoreline, killing a 38-year-old man.
- In Waukesha County, efforts are underway to extradite a 26-year-old California man who authorities believe stabbed a woman to death in a murder-for-hire scheme in October. It is thought the man was hired to kill the woman by her former boyfriend; the couple has a four-year-old child. DNA evidence linked the alleged killer to the crime.
- In Walworth County, three East Troy High School teens died, and another was critically injured, in a two vehicle crash. Slick roads were present at the time of the accident.
- In Marinette County, a 40-year-old man changed his plea from not guilty to no contest in regards to a January 2009 crash that killed a 44-year-old man and his four children; two of whom were pregnant. The man charged was allegedly driving while intoxicated.
- In Dane County, authorities believe a 38-year-old man is responsible for killing two women and two children in separate incidents that occurred within a few hours of each other. Police feel the killer had relationships with both women, and he was the father of the children. The women were ages 25 and 33, the children ages 23 months and 2 years. The man's body was found inside a vehicle a few days later, with a self-inflicted gunshot wound.
- In Waukesha County, a 29-year-old man died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound after beating his ex-girlfriend, pointing a gun at her and holding her hostage in the trunk of his car.
- In Milwaukee County, a 22-year-old woman pled guilty to second-degree reckless homicide in the shaking death of her 2-month-old son. She told authorities the incident happened after the child would not stop crying.
- In Milwaukee U. S. District Court, 14 people were charged with federal drug charges in the death of a 23-year-old man who died at a service station in July 2008.
- In Jefferson County, two people were died after allegedly being shot outside a tavern by a 24-year-old man. A 37-year-old woman, an off-duty police officer, died shortly after the incident, and a 40-year-old man died after being flown to a Milwaukee hospital.
- In Grant County, a 61-year-old man died after a trailer loaded with wood rolled on top of him. The man was pulling the trailer with an ATV when it jack-knifed; it rolled on top of him as he was working to free it.

- In Sheboygan County, a 32-year-old man has been charged after allegedly bringing a baseball bat to a funeral home after hearing a relative had been hurt in a disturbance there. The man had been drinking.
- In Manitowoc County, survivors of deceased family members won't be charged a \$25 "death certificate fee" after 21 supervisors voiced opposition at a County Board meeting. The Herald Times Reporter noted that some Wisconsin counties charge as much as \$125, and the statewide average is \$30 for such a fee. Supervisor Paul Hansen was quoted by the paper as saying, "I'm not sure why we have a coroner...hospitals can sign a death certificate. Why do we need a coroner to sign off and say, 'Yeah, he is really dead'." The paper went on to note that Board Chairman Jim Brey "was concerned the approximate annual revenue of \$5000 might end up 'as a raise' for the officeholder who has expressed concerns about his compensation level." Curtis Green is the coroner of Manitowoc County.
- In Brookfield, an 87-year-old woman died and another woman of the same age was injured in a two vehicle crash; both women were driving.
- A new study says Wisconsin war veterans are more likely to commit suicide than the general population is. The report says that veterans make up 8% of Wisconsin's population, but committed almost 21% of the state's suicides.
- In Lafayette County, four people died in a fire at the Silver Dollar Saloon. Three of the dead were found in apartments above the bar; the owner of the tavern also died as he tried to get the others out of the building. The dead include a 44-year-old woman, and three men aged 45, 34 and 23.
- In Waukesha County, a 46-year-old man died after the ATV he was driving fell through the ice on Big Muskego Lake. The lake is reported to be shallow and spring fed.
- In Milwaukee County, a 19-year-old male was sentenced to 41 years in prison for the 2008 shooting death of a 38-year-old man.
- In Dane County, a 63-year-old man died after his ice sailboat broke through the surface of Lake Monona.
- In Milwaukee County, a judge ordered a single trial for a 49-year-old man who is accused of seven homicides, all believed to be prostitutes. The deaths occurred between 1986-2007. The man has been linked to the cases by DNA evidence.
- In Fond du Lac County, a woman was sentenced to 8 years in prison after she helped her son dispose of his girlfriend's body. She helped her son move the body in a cooler, burn the body and dispose of the remains through holes cut in the ice on Lake Winnebago. The homicide victim was 28.
- In Manitowoc County, an attorney asked that homicide charges be dismissed against a 40-year-old man who is accused of killing his 50-year-old wife. Her body was found by hunters in November. The attorney thinks the charge should be dismissed because "state forensics has not provided evidence of a time or place of death." The judge denied the request, and the accused pled not guilty.
- In Milwaukee County, the death of a 45-year-old man found lying in an alley on December 16 was ruled a homicide. The man died a week after being found.
- In Jackson County, a 9-year-old boy died after the snowboard he was riding down a hill went onto a highway and he was struck by a van, driven by a 19-year-old man. The boy was celebrating the Christmas holiday at his grandparent's home.

- A study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention showed that more Wisconsin teens are wearing their seatbelts; only 15% say they rarely or never wear one. That number is nearly half of what was reported in a 1993 study. 25% admitted to riding in a car with a driver who had been drinking; that was down from 39% in 1993. 9% admitted to driving after drinking, as compared to 15% in the 1993 study. More than 2400 students from 57 public high schools participated in the study.
- In Brown County, a 76-year-old woman died in a four vehicle accident in DePere.
- In Dane County, a 57-year-old woman died in a head-on crash. A truck driven by a 49-year-old man, who may have fallen asleep, crossed the center line, striking her vehicle head-on.
- In Milwaukee County, a 6-month-old child died, apparently in another co-sleeping incident. The child was sleeping in a bed with her mother, who is a certified day-care teacher, and her two-year-old brother.
- In Milwaukee County, a 42-year-old woman died after someone shot her through her front door.
- In Milwaukee County, a 59-year-old man was stabbed to death inside his home.
- Congratulations to the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel for their award-winning, five-part series called *Wasted in Wisconsin*. They were recognized by NHTSA, the Governor's Highway Safety Association (GHSA) and the WisDOT at this summer's Governor's Conference on Highway Safety. Wisconsin had 41.4% of fatal crashes where the driver had a BAC of .08 or higher (2007 stats). Only North Dakota and South Carolina came close. "Beer for beer and shot for shot, when all 50 states belly up to the bar, few can hold their own with Wisconsin. Binge drinking – we're number 1. Percentage of drinkers in the population – we're number 1. Driving under the influence – we're number 1."
- In Milwaukee County, police arrested 4 people after a six-month-old baby was found dead, apparently under a mattress in a cottage. An investigation is underway to determine if the child had been beaten. The child's 15-year-old mother had left the baby with friends and apparently was not present when the death occurred.
- In Langlade County, a 53-year-old man died after his vehicle broke through the ice. The man kicked out a window and pushed his daughter to safety before he died.
- In Winnebago County, a 57-year-old man asked a judge to release him from a mental health facility where he had been sent after he pled not guilty by mental disease or defect in a 2008 homicide. The man stabbed another male 142 times in an Oshkosh apartment building.
- In Brown County, a 49-year-old man died of injuries apparently suffered after he fell on an icy sidewalk outside an apartment building. Police had been called to the building to investigate a disturbance an hour before the man fell, but no one would answer the door. His family feels that foul play was involved in the man's death.
- In Calumet County, a 33-year-old St. Anna fire fighter died when a dumpster exploded outside a foundry. The department had been called to put out a dumpster fire. Initial reports indicate the explosion occurred when water was

used in an attempt to extinguish burning metal inside the dumpster. He was the 4th Wisconsin fire fighter to die in the line of duty this decade.

- In Taylor County, the deaths of a couple was ruled a murder-suicide. The couple, once married, had lived together even after they were divorced.
- In Adams County, the body of a 43-year-old woman was found in a remote area. The woman had last been seen in an Altoona tavern several days earlier.
- In Milwaukee County, a 21-year-old woman was killed and her boyfriend critically injured when their car was struck by an SUV that was fleeing police. The woman was a senior at UW-Madison, majoring in social work.
- In Waukesha County, a 17-year-old girl died after being ejected from a snowmobile and striking a car on Lower Phantom Lake. She was not wearing a helmet. There are conflicting stories if the car was moving or not; a 15-year-old girl was behind the wheel of the car when the accident occurred.
- In Milwaukee County, 72 homicides were committed in 2009, one more than in 2008. The lowest year on record was 1985, with 70 murders; the highest was 1991, with 168. The average between 1985 and 2008 is 117 homicides.
- The Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel reported that Wisconsin is missing DNA samples from about 13,000 felons who should be in the state database. 90% of the samples missing are for people who currently are not under “state supervision.”
- Happy New Year.