

**Smith remembered for
her smile, thoughtfulness**

Woman was stabbed to death inside her home

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Friends and family of Kim Smith were stunned by the news that she was stabbed to death Oct. 1 in her Maple Street home, shaking up the community and leaving many unanswered questions.

Smith, 39, was found dead in the living room of her residence at 334 S. Maple St. the morning of Oct. 1. The police department was notified by dispatch at 9:32 a.m., and officers and rescue personnel arrived on the scene within two minutes.

Oconomowoc Police Chief David Beguhn said the fiance she lived with, Tim McMickle, left for work at 6 a.m. When he called her at the Waukesha County Department of Health and Human Services where she works, he was told she had not come in, so he returned home to find her dead body, Beguhn said.

Police believe the murder took place sometime between 6:30 a.m. and 9:30 a.m.

A former employee at The (Waukesha) Freeman, Smith left the company five years ago, but her picture still hangs in the office, where she had formed many lasting friendships. Her former co-workers remembered Smith for the smile she always wore and for how much she loved her son.

"There just isn't enough words to say what a gentle, kind and sweet soul she was," said former co-worker Diane Ericksen.

The homicide is the second since 2006, when Mark Totzke killed his mother with an ax in her sleep. Before that homicide, the city had gone 29 years without a murder.

Smith was also living with her son, Jackson, who was unharmed by the event. After the murder, the young boy underwent a forensic interview at a specialty care center in Waukesha. Based on those interviews, it did not appear the young boy witnessed the event, Beguhn said. The boy is staying with his grandmother, he said.

Online court records show Smith was involved in a lengthy custody battle with Darren Wold, an ex-boyfriend and the father of her son. Beguhn said police contacted Wold on Oct. 1, and he was in Texas, where he lives.

The police department has had contact with persons of interest, but no arrests have been made at this time.

"We don't discount anybody at this point," Beguhn said. "We are talking to friends and acquaintances. ..."

An autopsy was conducted Friday by the Waukesha County Medical Examiner's Office, which confirmed the body had "multiple sharp force injuries." A knife suspected to have been used was recovered and will be transported to the State Crime Lab for examination, according to the release.

The Smith family released a statement Friday afternoon saying words can't express their grief and asking for their privacy to be respected.

"Kim Smith was a wonderful mother, daughter, sister, aunt, friend, and associate to many," the statement said. "Most of



Jeff Rumage/Enterprise Staff

Oconomowoc police are investigating a homicide that took place inside this house at 334 S. Maple St. the morning of Oct. 1.

all, she was very dedicated to her 4-year-old son and worked hard to provide him with the best love and care a parent could provide. She approached every day with enthusiasm and goodwill for others. Her sudden loss has created an extreme void for many people who love her dearly."

Smith worked in the classifieds department before moving into the accounting department at The Freeman, Ericksen said.

"Her son was her whole world," she said.

After Smith left The Freeman, she continued to stay in touch with her former co-workers, sending them photos and e-mail updates about her son, some of which still hang on a photo wall. Ericksen said she heard from Smith about a week ago.

"She said she had never been so happy," she said.

Ericksen said she didn't believe the news of Smith's death when she first heard it, hoping that there could be two Kimberly Smiths.

"She was always so thoughtful. I think so many people will be shocked. I can't imagine someone couldn't like Kimmy," she said.

Sandy Giesfeldt also worked with Smith in accounting at The Freeman.

"She was the kindest person. No matter what kind of situation it was, she always had a smile on her face," she said. "If there was anything to do, she would do it."

Custody battle

Online court records show Smith and Wold were involved in a lengthy custody battle over their son. On the day of the murder, a report was expected to be filed in Washington County that portrayed Wold in an unfavorable light, said Jerry Becker, an independent attorney hired to represent the best interests of the child.

Because he lives out of state, Wold was required to hire a social worker to write a report detailing the child's potential living conditions. In order to get paid by Wold, the Texas social worker showed his report to him sometime early last week, Becker said.

"The social worker in Texas met with



Submitted photo

Kim Smith, 39, was killed in her home the morning of Oct. 1. Police continue to investigate and have yet to make an arrest in the case.

Darren. He would have known what that social worker's report said, and he would have known it was not favorable to what he wanted," Becker said.

Becker said the parents, their attorneys and himself were scheduled to discuss the report during a scheduling conference Oct. 15, where a trial might have been scheduled to have resolved any disagreements.

In July 2009, the court found Wold in contempt because he had failed to pay child support or provide health insurance for the child, among other requirements. Wold was ordered to spend 60 days in Washington County Jail, although the sentence was stayed for one year.

Smith filed a harassment restraining order against Wold on Aug. 28, 2008.

Beguhn said the police department has talked to Wold multiple times, and they

See SMITH, PAGE A10

Smith

From Page A1

plan to maintain contact with him.

Investigation continues

Beguhn said the police department is canvassing the area again, processing evidence, and has put together an outline of what they have to do to follow up.

"We're moving forward, but it's a slow process," he said.

When asked if the autopsy revealed any signs of struggle, Beguhn said there was no additional trauma to the body and no unusual markings. Beguhn dismissed other news reports stating Smith was found bound.

Beguhn would not say where she was stabbed or how many times she was stabbed.

Beguhn said statistics show most homicides involve someone known to the victim, but he would not say if he suspects Smith's killer had a personal connection to her.

Neighbor Jim Malkow said McMickle usually leaves for work about 7:15 a.m., and Smith leaves shortly afterward. When McMickle returned about 8:50 a.m. in his company's delivery vehicle, Jackson was waiting for him at the door, he said. Police arrived shortly afterward.

The homicide shook up the tiny residential street on the west end of the city.

"I bought this house 40 years ago," Malkow said. "This street will never be the same for me."

Rod Borkenhagen, Jr., who lives next door to the crime scene, said he met the woman and her boyfriend, and they were always friendly.

"I wish this never would have happened," he said. "If it would've happened a week ago when my windows were open, I might have been able to help."

A custodial account has been set up to benefit Smith's son at M&I Bank. Contributions can be made at any branch office.

A visitation will be held at 10 a.m. today at Church and Chapel Funeral Home at highways J and JJ, four blocks south of Interstate 94. It will be followed by an 11 a.m. service. Committal services will be held at Prairie Home Cemetery in Waukesha.