



Brackbill to stand trial for murder

Cause of death: Positional asphyxiation

Marie Chomicki
Staff Reporter/Dillsburg Banner

Bryan Wayne Brackbill, Jr., 32, will stand trial for the murder of Sandra "Sandy" Smith Mulder, 52, of 204 Chestnut Grove Road, Dillsburg.

"All charges have been met and it will be taken to court," District Magistrate Richard Thomas said following testimony Monday morning at the preliminary hearing held at the Carroll Township Municipal building.

Thomas set the trial date for August 30, 2013 at 9 a.m. at the York County Judicial Center and remanded Brackbill to York County Prison without bail to await trial.

Charges filed against Brackbill include criminal homicide, unlawful restraint/serious bodily injury, theft by unlawful taking or possession and unauthorized use of auto-

mobiles and other vehicles.

David Sunday, Chief of Litigation for the Commonwealth said at the hearing that the cause of death was determined to be "positional asphyxiation" in the "manner of homicide" according to the July 8, 2013 autopsy report by forensic pathologist Dr. Barbara Bollinger.

Three witnesses were called to the stand, all on behalf of the Commonwealth.

Det. Sgt. John Schreiner, Carroll Township Police testified that Mulder's body was found by family members on Sunday, June 2.

Schreiner said he was called to the scene at 12:30 p.m. After entering the house through the front door, he went to a downstairs bedroom and discovered Mulder's body lying face down on a bedroom floor, legs and hands bound behind her back with

duct tape. Schreiner said the body was clothed and decomposing; there was a multi-colored towel on her back. He said the room appeared "messy" and the bed was moved. Near the victim's head was a blood stain on the carpet, a broken lamp and a hole in the wall, the detective said. Schreiner said he did not observe any wounds.

Andrew Power, son-in-law to the victim, told the court that when he arrived the bathroom lights on the top floor were on, Mulder's car was gone and he could hear music playing. Power said he gained entry into the house by removing a screen to a downstairs window that was open. Upon entry he found his mother-in-law lying on the floor covered with a towel, which he said he took off. Power said he then went upstairs to get Lisa, who came downstairs.

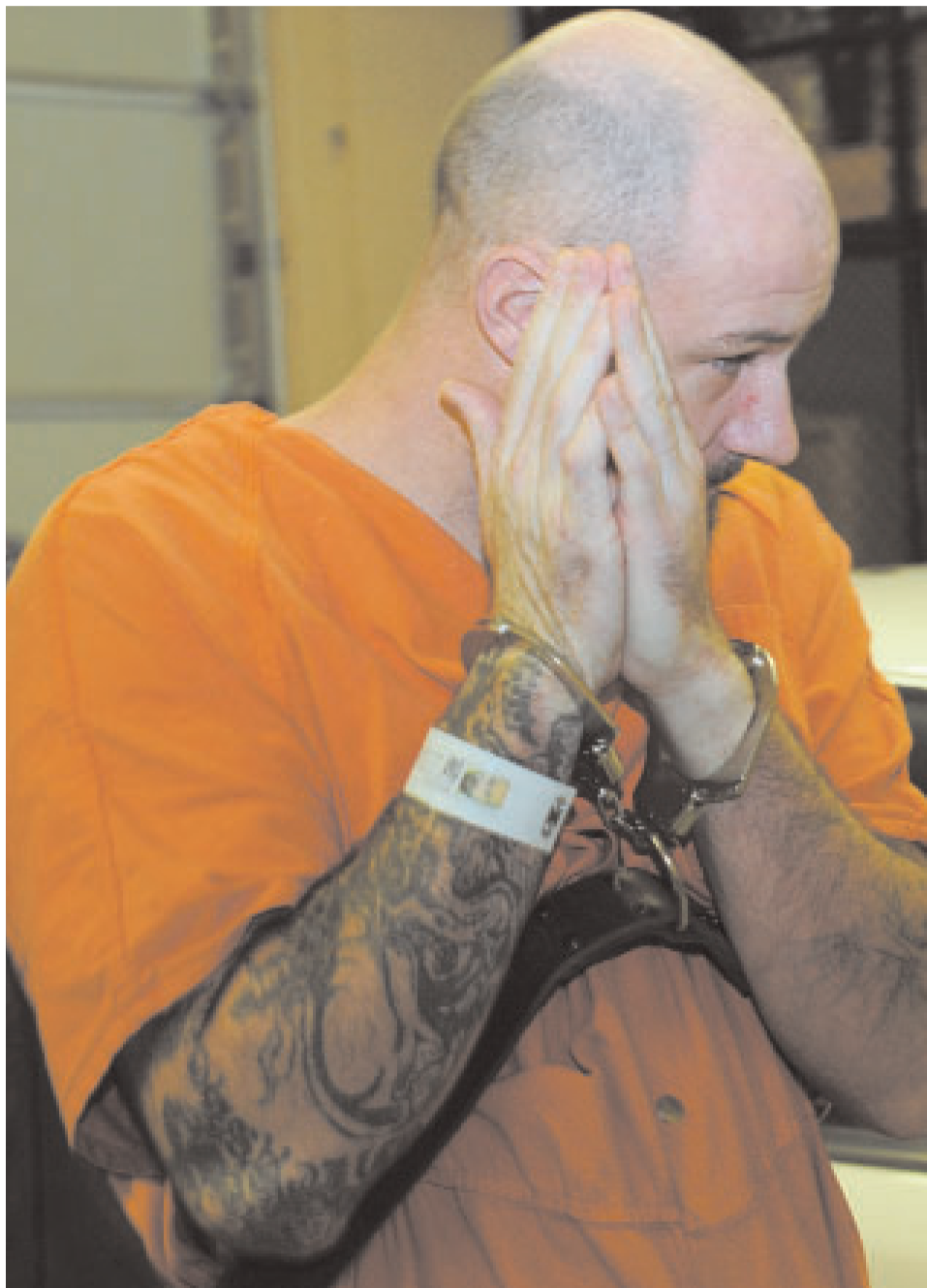
Also testifying was Crystal Hughes, Brackbill's girlfriend, who was visibly upset, knees shaking, as she sat on the stand and began to testify. A sniffing Hughes said she has known Brackbill for four years; they lived together for the past three months, at three different places including the deceased's and Brackbill's boss's homes.

Hughes said she set off on a road trip on June 1 with Shawn Snyder, Brackbill's boss's wife, to take a car to Snyder's daughter.

While at a hotel in Indiana, Hughes said she received a phone call from Brackbill at 1 a.m. At this time Brackbill told her he just got into a fight with his boss and he wanted to come get her. Hughes testified Brackbill seemed upset on the phone. Hughes said Snyder left after the call and she waited at the hotel for Brackbill.

Hughes said Brackbill picked her up the next day at 1 p.m. in a grey Pontiac, which she knew to be Sandy's car.

Hughes said they left the hotel, didn't know where they were headed, but eventually got another hotel room.



Photos by Curt Werner/Dillsburg Banner

Bryan Wayne Brackbill, Jr., is escorted to a holding cell in the Carroll Township Municipal building prior to his preliminary hearing before District Magistrate Richard Thomas on Monday morning. Brackbill, 32, will stand trial for the murder of Sandra "Sandy" Smith Mulder, 52, of 204 Chestnut Grove Road, Dillsburg.

Hughes testified that at this time her boyfriend said he "did a bad thing," but she didn't remember how it came up in conversation.

Hughes said they did not stay overnight because Brackbill was angry at the hotel people. Hughes testified Brackbill didn't get any phone calls at this time.

While they were at a McDonald's, Hughes testified that Lisa Power, the victim's daughter called her cell phone and spoke to Brackbill.

"He told me he killed her," Hughes testified Brackbill said right after talking to Lisa; and then not long after, he left her saying "he needed to go."

Cross-examination by Michael Rutt, Brackbill's attorney, revealed that Hughes and the defendant both smoked crack in Indianapolis, but did not take any pills.

This revelation, the smoking of crack, stirred the emotions of Brackbill's relatives as they left the

hearing. "They take the testimony of a star witness and she admitted she was a crack head - she was doing crack, and they're taking that against him, that's bologna," Anna Ercolino, grandmother to four of Brackbill's children, said after the hearing. "He's not guilty. In my heart I know whatever happened he didn't set out to kill her."

See Brackbill to stand trial. 5A



Sandra "Sandy" Smith Mulder, 52, of 204 Chestnut Grove Road, Dillsburg was found dead by relatives on June 2 in her home.



Crystal Hughes, Brackbill's girlfriend, one of three witnesses to testify.



Anna Ercolino, grandmother to four of Brackbill's children, speaks to the press in the parking lot after the hearing.



"We don't think he did it," Maria Richcreek, a friend of the defendant.



Friends of the victim console each other after the hearing.

Carroll Township


National Night Out - Tuesday Aug. 6


5 - 9 p.m. at Logan Park

Residents of Carroll and Monaghan townships and Dillsburg Borough are invited to an old time family style cook out with exhibits by local fire departments, law enforcement and prizes on August 6 from 5 until 9 p.m. at Logan Park as part of the annual National Night Out celebration.

The concept of National Night Out is to promote crime prevention within the community in an effort to make our streets safe for families by heightening community awareness in combating crime and drugs. It is an opportunity to meet with friends, neighbors and the police officers that serve the area.

Please bring non-perishable food items for New Hope Ministries' food bank.



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Turning Back The Pages

20 YEARS AGO In the news...JULY 29, 1993

Carroll Township police are investigating over 50 acts of vandalism that occurred overnight Sunday into Monday primarily in the Hill and Dale development off Ore Bank Road. Street lights were smashed, tires slashed and mailboxes were destroyed along with various properties and vehicles being marked with nail polish and lipstick. Northern York County Regional police are also reporting several incidents in Dillsburg over the same time period.

Northern York County Regional police

visited the Dillsburg Summer Playground program for a bike safety program. The children have also been visited by Robert A. Powell, DDS who gave out free toothbrushes and dental care advice, Kristi's School of Dance and the Northern girls basketball team.

The Latimore Women's Christian Temperance Union met at the home of Mary Stambaugh in Lake Meade. They reported serving 16 gallons of fruit drinks, sending 32 get well and sympathy cards and

making 29 visits to the sick and infirm.

Seventeen Dillsburg and two Wellsville residents participated in the two day MS 150 bike ride to raise funds to fight Multiple Sclerosis. The ride started at Messiah College to Mount Saint Mary's in Emmitsburg, MD where riders spent the night, before biking back to Messiah the next day.

Northern York and Police Officers William Marcano and Thomas McCone assisted safety tips to young kids about at the Dillsburg Elementary playground last week. The children were also seen on riding and testing bikes.



Brackbill to stand trial

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"We don't think he did it," Maria Richcreek, Ercolino's daughter said. "The girl admitted smoking crack - that doesn't make sense," Richcreek added, questioning Hughes' testimony. She said her relationship to Brackbill is basically like a brother.

"I don't believe he did it," echoed Kim Nyhlum, Richcreek's sister; "He doesn't talk like that - the girl admitted she smoked crack."

Family members and friends of the victim did not have any comment after the hearing.

Brackbill was captured on June 3 in Boone County, Missouri around 8:45 p.m by Missouri State Highway Patrol on a routine assignment using an automatic license plate reader.

Brackbill who attended Northern High School, was living at the Mulder residence at the time of the murder.

"Generally, if somebody is of sufficient weight or girth and they're placed on their stomach and they can't roll over, often times their own weight will cause them to asphyxiate or go into cardiac arrest," Chief Sean Kapfhammer said after the hearing explaining the cause of death.

Police said no motive for the crime has been established.



Carroll Township Police Chief Sean Kapfhammer leads the way to bring prisoner Bryan Brackbill, flanked on either side by officials, from the hearing room at the municipal building after the preliminary hearing Monday morning.

Look and See Signs A Home Safety Assessment and Checklist

Seniors and their families might want to look for the following opportunities when performing a home safety assessment.

✓ Examine dark pathways, corners and other areas where seniors regularly walk or read. Make sure all areas of the home have adequate lighting. Timed and motion-sensor lights outdoors can illuminate potentially dangerous pathways. Inside, consider Ott-Lites - which provide a high-intensity beam for doing detail work. Make sure that hallways and stairs are properly lit.

✓ Avoid monochromatic color schemes. Contrast can help seniors with failing eyesight better navigate their homes. Large red and blue buttons over hot and cold water faucet controls will help prevent dangerous mistakes. A dark green or brown toilet seat and vinyl tape around the shower will make those fixtures more easily distinguished. Kitchen countertops should contrast with floors as well.

✓ Look for ways to

reorganize. Mom always put the black stew pot under the stove to keep the kids from breaking it. Perhaps now it belongs on a shelf beside the stove. And who says the eggs must go in the egg tray of the refrigerator? Perhaps it's easier for dad to handle them if they're stored in the meat tray. If that hallway table, which has always been a permanent fixture, is becoming a dangerous obstacle, relocate it.

✓ Look behind closed doors. Many seniors will close off parts of a house they no longer use. Be sure to check those areas regularly for mold or water damage. Don't close vents to crawl

spaces.

✓ Look for ways to simplify your senior's life. Talk to your parents about why and how they do things then look for ways to simplify their lives. If your Mom's immaculate floors are now regularly dirty, think about how she's been doing that job all these years and offer options.

Rather than a heavy mop and bucket, investigate light-weight, all-in-one mops. If your senior is replacing appliances, look for smooth-top stoves and refrigerators with water and ice on the outside. Change door knobs to levers, or purchase grips that can go on conventional knobs. Convert single-bulb light fixtures to multiple bulbs so seniors still have light when one bulb burns out.

✓ Consider security. Think about the potential dangers that lurk within

your loved one's home. Lock-in switches on thermostats and stoves will keep seniors with dementia and Alzheimer's disease from harming themselves. Help them manage in their environment by installing a cordless intercom.

✓ Keep an eye out for damage. Watch for signs that a senior is adapting his or her behavior to the environment. Look for towel bars or window sills that are pulling away or shower curtains that have torn from seniors using them to grab onto.

✓ Look for ways to make entries safe. Make sure that railings into a home are in good repair and that steps and sidewalks are not damaged. Or eliminate steps altogether. Make sure that doors into a home can be set to stay open for carrying groceries and other items in and out. Install remote control locks.

✓ Is clutter taking over? Messy conditions and broken items are important warning signs. Remove area rugs and stacks of newspapers and magazines, or other potential obstacles.

✓ Contact a professional senior-care service, such as Home Instead Senior

Care, which can conduct a home safety assessment and serve as a second set of eyes for older adults.

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Camp Evangelist
Pastor Ronnie Riggins
New Life Baptist Church
New Cumberland



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Worship Leader Tab Beechler
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