
STATE OF MINNESOTA
COUNTY OF DAKOTA

DISTRICT COURT
FIRST JUDICIAL DISTRICT

COURT FILE NO. _____
COUNTY ATTORNEY FILE NO. CA-09-1276
CONTROLLING AGENCY: MN0190600
CONTROL NUMBER: 09008656

State of Minnesota,

Plaintiff,

SUMMONS

WARRANT

ORDER OF DETENTION

AMENDED

v.

PATRICIA ANN BECHT
716 1ST AVE S
SOUTH ST PAUL MN 55075
DOB: 3-23-67

Defendant.

COMPLAINT

The Complainant, being duly sworn, makes complaint to the above-named Court and states that there is probable cause to believe that the Defendant committed the following offense(s):

COUNT I

MURDER IN THE FIRST DEGREE

M.S. § 609.185(a)(1); 609.106, subd. 2(1); 609.101

Life Imprisonment Without Possibility of Release

MOC: H1H04

GOC: N

Felony

Gross Misdemeanor

Misdemeanor

Petty Misdemeanor

That on or about July 6, 2009, in Dakota County, Minnesota, Patricia Ann Becht caused the death of a human being, Michael Vonheath Becht, Jr, with premeditation and with intent to effect the death of that person or another.

COUNT II

ATTEMPTED MURDER IN THE FIRST DEGREE

M.S. § 609.185(a)(1); 609.17, subd. 1, subd. 4(1); 609.101

20 Years Imprisonment

MOC: H1H04

GOC: A

Felony

Gross Misdemeanor

Misdemeanor

Petty Misdemeanor

That on or about July 6, 2009, in Dakota County, Minnesota, PATRICIA ANN BECHT, with intent to commit a crime, did an act which was a substantial step toward, and more than preparation for the commission of the crime of murder in the first degree by attempting to cause the death of a human being, her youngest daughter, E.B., with premeditation and with intent to effect the death of that person or another.

STATEMENT OF PROBABLE CAUSE

The Complainant states that the following facts establish probable cause:

Your Complainant is a licensed and certified peace officer in the State of Minnesota, and is employed as a police officer for the South St. Paul Police Department. Your complainant has investigated the following matter, reviewed the reports and statements of others, and states that the following facts obtained from the investigation and the described documents are true and correct to the best of his knowledge and belief.

On July 6, 2009, at 5:30 p.m., South St. Paul Police and the South Metro Fire Department were dispatched to an address on 1st Avenue South in South St. Paul, Dakota County, Minnesota, on an initial report that a 10-year-old boy was not breathing, and was turning blue. While en route, emergency personnel received an additional dispatch that it appeared the situation may have been a murder-suicide, and there was a note at the residence.

Lt. Voight of the South Metro Fire Department was one of the first emergency personnel on the scene. Lt. Voight reported that upon entering the residence, he stepped into the living room, and was met by an adult female near the stairway, later identified as the niece of the homeowner. The niece who was carrying a juvenile female, later identified as the defendant's youngest daughter, E.B., age 11, who appeared unconscious. Lt. Voight took the juvenile female

and handed her over to the fire captain who rushed her to the front yard to provide medical assistance. Lt. Voight and South St. Paul police officers then went up to the second floor of the residence, looking for additional victims. In the front bedroom, Lt. Voight stated that he observed a juvenile male laying on the bed who was obviously deceased. The juvenile male was later identified as the defendant's son, Michael Vonheath Becht, Jr., age 10. Both the lieutenant and the officer checked vital signs and confirmed that the juvenile was deceased.

Emergency personnel then discovered an adult female, later identified as Patricia Ann Becht, the above-named defendant, on the bathroom floor. She was escorted to the lower level of the residence where treatment was begun due to her medical condition. Patricia Becht and E.B. were taken to hospitals by ambulances for emergency medical treatment.

Numerous pill bottles were observed on a dresser in the room in which the juvenile male was located. The medications included various prescription medications and controlled substances, including Seroquel, Hydroxyzine, Divalproex, Clonazepam, Oxycodone, Lorazepam, and Risperidone.

On the coffee table in the living room on the main level, officers found a letter that appeared to be written by an adult in ink. The letter was identified by the niece as being in the handwriting of Patricia Becht. The letter was addressed to the defendant's oldest daughter, C.F., age 16, who was not present at the time. The letter stated that the defendant knew the oldest daughter would not understand why, and it also stated that the defendant could not ask that daughter to come with. The defendant also wrote in the letter that at last she and the other two children were at peace. The defendant further listed the relatives whom she wanted the older daughter to live. The defendant wrote that she could not leave the two younger children "there".

In another writing located at the scene of this incident, the defendant wrote, "I don't have much to say, only that we are happy to be gone." A third writing was entitled "Things to do for

Sunday.” The list read, “get all letters written, make sure [the oldest daughter] has her own personal letter, leave numbers for [the oldest daughter] to call people that have cared about me and the kids, count all medication to equal out the amounts needed depending on weight, get sleeping area ready, prior.”

During the investigation, South St. Paul officers spoke to the niece of the defendant. The niece stated that the defendant’s oldest daughter, C.F., had called her that day from a location out of town and advised that she had been calling her mother, but had been unable to reach her. The daughter asked the niece to go to the residence and contact her mother. The niece told officers that she went to the Becht home, pounded on the door, but did not get any response. She said that she got into the house through an open window, and when she went upstairs, she found Michael not breathing, the younger daughter in a semi-conscious state, and the defendant in the bathroom vomiting. When the niece found the suicide note, she called 911. The niece also stated that the defendant had commented a couple weeks earlier that she was going to take the two younger children, lock them in the garage and start the car, in order to kill all of them.

The police officers canvassed the neighborhood, and when speaking to an 11-year-old neighbor in the presence of her parents, learned that she knew Michael Becht and had been playing with him the previous day. She remembered Michael Becht saying something about pills. When the younger daughter, E.B., heard Michael telling that to the neighbor girl, E.B. scolded Michael for telling her, and told Michael to go into the house.

On July 7, 2009, South St. Paul police officers met with the defendant in her hospital room at a metropolitan hospital. After a Miranda warning and waiver, the defendant agreed to give a recorded statement. At first the defendant said she was frequently thinking of killing herself, but not her children. Eventually, she admitted having planned with her son Michael and her younger daughter, E.B., to commit suicide together using pills. She said that during the

recent coverage of the death of Michael Jackson the children asked her about his home, Neverland. The defendant said she told the children that Neverland was a place for kids to go, and it was similar to heaven. The defendant went on to say that she discussed going to Neverland with her children as part of their suicide plan. She also identified herself as the author of the suicide note found at the residence. She said she eventually divided up the Seroquel pills among herself and the two children, giving each of the children ten tablets, and herself 25 tablets. The defendant claimed that she did not recall the children actually taking the pills, but described her son Michael as having gone to sleep and recalled rubbing his back. She said her next memory was being in the ambulance on the way to the hospital.

NOTICE: You must appear for every court hearing on this charge. A failure to appear for court on this charge is a criminal offense and may be punished as provided in Minn. Stat. §609.49.

Complainant requests that Defendant, PATRICIA ANN BECHT, subject to bail or conditions of release, be:

- (1) arrested or that other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant's appearance in court, or
- (2) detained, if already in custody, pending further proceedings, and that said Defendant otherwise be dealt with according to law.

COMPLAINANT'S NAME

COMPLAINANT'S SIGNATURE

Subscribed and sworn to before the undersigned this ____ day of _____, 2009.

NOTARY STAMP:

SIGNATURE

Notary Public

Being authorized to prosecute the offenses charged, I approve this complaint.

Date: _____ (rac)

PROSECUTING ATTORNEY SIGNATURE:

Name: James C. Backstrom
Assistant Dakota County Attorney
Dakota County Judicial Center
1560 Highway 55
Hastings MN 55033
(651) 438-4438
Attorney Registration No.: 3797

FINDING OF PROBABLE CAUSE

From the above sworn facts, and any supporting affidavits or supplemental sworn testimony, I, the Issuing Officer, have determined that probable cause exists to support, subject to bail or conditions of release where applicable, Defendant’s arrest or other lawful steps be taken to obtain Defendant’s appearance in court, or Defendant’s detention, if already in custody, pending further proceedings. Defendant is therefore charged with the above-stated offense.

[] SUMMONS

THEREFORE YOU, THE ABOVE-NAMED DEFENDANT, ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to appear on the date stated on the attached Notice of Hearing before the above-named court at Dakota County Judicial Center, 1560 Highway 55, Hastings, Minnesota, 55033 to answer this complaint.

IF YOU FAIL TO APPEAR in response to this SUMMONS, a WARRANT FOR YOUR ARREST shall be issued.

[] WARRANT

To the Sheriff of the above-named county; or other person authorized to execute this warrant: I hereby order, in the name of the State of Minnesota, that the above-named Defendant be apprehended and arrested without delay and brought promptly before the above-named court (if in session), and if not, before a Judge or Judicial Officer of such court without unnecessary delay, and in any event not later than 36 hours after the arrest or as soon as such Judge or Judicial Officer is available to be dealt with according to law.

[] Execute in MN Only [] Execute Nationwide [] Execute in MN and Border States

[X] ORDER OF DETENTION

Since the above-named Defendant is already in custody, I hereby order, subject to bail or conditions of release, that the above-named Defendant continue to be detained pending further proceedings.

Bail: \$
Conditions of Release:

This complaint, duly subscribed and sworn to, issued by the undersigned Judicial Officer this
10th day of July, 2009.

**JUDICIAL OFFICER:
NAME:**

SIGNATURE:

TITLE: JUDGE OF DISTRICT COURT

/s/ _____
Judge

COUNTY OF DAKOTA
STATE OF MINNESOTA

Clerk’s Signature or File Stamp

STATE OF MINNESOTA

Plaintiff,

vs.

Patricia Ann Becht

Defendant.

*RETURN OF SERVICE
I hereby Certify and Return that I have served a copy of this
COMPLAINT upon the Defendant herein named.*

Signature of Authorized Service Agent:
