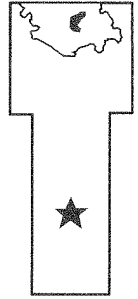




**"TO PROTECT
AND SERVE"**

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February 4, 2010

Attempted Suicide

Press Release:

Sheriff Brent C. Lindgren reports that on February 4, 2010 at approximately 05:20 AM, while Mille Lacs County Jail Correctional Officers were doing their required well being checks of inmates held in Mille Lacs County Jail, Inmate Walter Allen Wildhirt, 32 years old, of rural Milaca was found out of his bed in his cell, further checking by Correctional Officers discovered his bed sheet missing and further observed Mr. Wildhirt had configured the bed sheet in such a manner to be attached to a sprinkler head grate on the wall and wrapped around his neck in an attempted suicide effort. A Mille Lacs County Correctional Officer had previously conducted well-being checks just 25 minutes earlier and Mr. Wildhirt was observed in his bed under the covers and well! Sheriff Lindgren reports that well-being checks are regularly performed 24/7/365.

Correctional Officers trained and certified in first aid then entered Wildhirt's cell and performed emergency life saving measures. They performed CPR, applied A.E.D. and administered assisted breathing techniques. North Memorial Ambulance was called and Mr. Wildhirt was transported to Princeton Fairview Hospital with a pulse.

Walter Wildhirt is in custody after his most recent convictions of 1st and 2nd Degree Criminal Sexual Conduct Conduct. Wildhirt is to be sentenced tomorrow, Friday, February 5th, 2010, in Mille Lacs County District Court on those convictions. 1st Degree Criminal Sexual Conduct carries a maximum penalty of 30 years confinement and/or \$40,000.00 fine and 2nd Degree Criminal Sexual Conduct carries a maximum penalty of 25 years confinement and/or \$35,000.00 fine. Walter Wildhirt has been in custody in the Mille Lacs County Jail 143 days, since September 15th, 2009. Mr. Wildhirt is held on a \$300,000.00 Bail for a release violation and there exists an additional hold by Carlton County.

Prior to the most recent two criminal sexual conduct convictions, Mr. Wildhirt had also been convicted of mutiple felonies including 4th Degree Criminal Sexual Conduct, Burglaries, Theft, Dishonored Checks and traffic related violations. Upon sentencing, previous criminal history is taken into consideration.

Sheriff Lindgren has requested the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension to assist with an inquiry into Mr. Wildhirt's attempted suicide to ensure there is no appearance of a conflict of interest with the inquiry.

Sheriff Lindgren commends his staff with their quick response to Mr. Wildhirt's suicide attempt. Sheriff Lindgren reports that there have been suicide attempts of inmates where their lives were saved as a result of well-being checks. In those cases, Correctional Officers were presented with life saving awards.

Brent C. Lindgren
Mille Lacs County Sheriff