

Charges

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from several Watertown businesses also showed a woman, later identified as Kennedy, making transactions on the stolen card.

There are \$2,442.94 in fraudulent charges in Day County alone. Other transactions took place in Minnehaha, Brown, Marshall, Roberts, Codington and Brookings counties, as well as in North Dakota and online.

The purchases were likely made between July 10-Oct. 12, 2015.

Court documents show that Kennedy had done bookkeeping for Mitchell and that Mitchell was aware Kennedy was having financial problems.

At the time of her arrest, Kennedy reported being unemployed. Her employment with the municipality of Grenville was terminated at a special executive meeting in September 2015 when the town board became suspicious of fraudulent financial municipality activities, according to Dolney.

The state Department of Legislative Audit became involved in that case shortly after that and Grenville's assets were locked down.

"It's been a sit and wait thing since then," Dolney said.

The Legislative Audit's special review encompassed the dates of Aug. 1, 2014 through Sept. 11, 2015. It was presented by Olson to the Grenville Town Board at their March 7 meeting.

The review found irregularities within the municipal liquor store receipts and deposits, a number of checks re-deemed for cash, additional checks presented for cash, deposits and cash withdrawals, an additional payroll check and unauthorized transfers from the municipality's savings account to checking.

According to the report, records showed \$47,703.93 less than records of Municipal Liquor Store receipts and video lottery and game profits between the dates of the review.

A review of the video lottery logs showed five instances where cash was turned over to Kennedy to be deposited but the Legislative Audit was unable to determine those amounts were ever deposited intact to the town's bank account.

There were also 10 checks which were cashed between April 14 and Aug. 25, 2015. The total of those checks is \$11,557. In three of the cases, the date of the check and date of it being cashed were not in normal numerical sequence.

In most of the cases, the check memo field or accounting record notation indicated that the purpose of the checks were to replenish the video lottery cash box at the Municipal Liquor Store. However, no documentation of that cash ever being added was found. The corresponding cash box balance also did not match up, the report states.

"A lot of trust went on there that was misplaced," Dolney said, adding that small towns tend to operate on trust. "Some things have just been done (the same way) for a long time."

Since last fall, the town board has been working to implement new procedures such as requiring checks to have two signatures, which they hope will prevent this type of fraud from being possible in the future.

"Everybody in town knows everyone... It's a town of 60 people, think about it. There's only 30 houses here. There's gossip everywhere," Dolney said. Having personally known most people since he was young makes the case feel personal.

The town board will be seeking the dollar amount found in the special report as well as the cost of that review - which was estimated to cost of over \$10,000, Dolney said.

"It's a terrible shame it's had to come to this," said Dolney who said the board is doing their best to pick up the pieces, however. "It's what happens. You move on."

Kennedy was indicated on the grand theft charge by a Day County grand jury last week. That charge is a Class 4 Felony, punishable by up to 10 years imprisonment, a fine of \$20,000 or both.

Kennedy is currently out on a \$5,000 surety bond with conditions of a no-contact order and no possession/consumption of alcohol nor entering establishments where the same is sold.

Day County Circuit Court Judge Jon S. Flemmer is presiding in the case. Kennedy's court-appointed legal representation is Scott Bratland of Watertown. Smeins is the prosecuting attorney for the case.

In the Grenville case, Smeins said it now comes down to show beyond a doubt that Kennedy is guilty. Until that time, she is presumed innocent.

"The burden of proof is that she was responsible (but) when dealing with cash, the paper trail is tough to follow," Smeins said.

Her next scheduled court date is April 6 in Day County. The Day County Sheriff's Office assisted in the Grenville investigation.

Skills

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one of the best things for his craft. The bird he'd mounted wasn't drying as it should which caused the judge to disqualify him; while talking to Kyle later to give him some pointers, the judge accidentally ruined the mount when he tried repositioning the bird's wing. Because the judge felt so bad about the incident, he invited Kyle to spend two days training with him - a class that usually costs \$500.

Looking back, Kyle said that was a turning point in his taxidermy career. It was worth that one ruined bird, he remarked.

Because that's the thing about taxidermy, he said; you never stop learning.

Kyle began doing taxidermy in high school, learning at his elder brother Kevin's elbow.

"Kevin...started in taxidermy. He had me do all the nasty stuff," Kyle said with a laugh, explaining that meant rendering the fat from the skin among other less pleasant parts of the craft. "Then one day, he had me start doing birds. I always looked up to him."

But it wasn't until college that Kyle got serious about the craft. He would come home and work out of his dad's garage since he couldn't do taxidermy in his dorm.

The biggest challenge to his craft is, "In every project you do, you literally destroy the specimen you're working on," he said. "Then you preserve the skin and mount it to make it look real again. The struggle is what's the best way to do that? There's a million ways of doing this - you never stop learning."

That's why Kyle said he enjoys going to taxidermy conventions so much - he said it's where people come together to learn each other's secrets.

With each passing year, Kyle says he knows he gets better.

"Looking at my (mounts) from way back when (is) probably embarrassing," he said with a laugh. "Even just within a yearly basis, I can see my improvement. This (art form) is (about) constantly learning to do better; it's a constant learning curve."

On the pheasant mount



Reporter & Farmer photo by Amanda Fanger

The detail of a spider web strung over a twig was tedious to create, but worth the time it took, said Kyle Monteith. Shown here is the female Lady Amherst pheasant in the taxidermy mount he won several awards on earlier this month in a North Dakota competition.

he did for competition this year, Kyle put in the detail of a spider's web between the forks of a twig. It was made with hot glue.

"It was time consuming, but I thought it was worth it," he said, then laughed and told how he'd considered putting a spider in the web too, ultimately deciding not to because he knew his wife wouldn't appreciate that particular detail.

Kyle said he spent about 60 hours on each of the competition mounts, although he doesn't spend that much time on the commercial mounts he does.

For Kyle, his favorite part of the process is near the end, just when he can start to see the specimen taking shape and beginning to look like a bird again.

"You try to get it as close to as God designed them," he said. "And sometimes, you can make them look even better than they did in the wild."

Kyle and brother Kevin have run Monteith Taxidermy together for about 15 years. While Kevin specializes in big game, Kyle specializes in birds - which he says it's one of the least for-



I get my inspiration both from hunting and fishing, but also just observing and admiring God's creation...

Kyle Monteith

giving types of taxidermy.

But taxidermy is just a side career and hobby for Kyle. Since he works full time for NRCS, he only has the chance to spend about two hours a day, between 8 and 10 each night, working on it in his basement workshop. He also puts in 11-hour days every other Friday and works at least that long each Saturday.

"My family takes the brunt of that sacrifice, but by doing this, it allows my wife to stay home with the kids, and that's always been a dream of hers," he said.

Kyle and his wife Danielle have three children, ages five, three and one.

As a lifelong and passionate hunter and fisherman, Kyle said, "I get my inspiration both from hunting and fishing, but also just observing and admiring God's creation. One cannot help but praise God for all the creatures He has cre-

ated just for our enjoyment."

To aspiring taxidermists, Kyle suggests training with a professional and perhaps starting out with a bufflehead duck, which is an easy starter bird he said.

"Just jump ahead right away," he commented. "Struggle for many, many years...Just keep mounting up stuff and eventually (you'll) catch on."

Kyle is a 2005 Langford High School graduate, although he had attended all but his senior year at Bristol High School before that school closed. He went on to earn his bachelors in wildlife and fisheries sciences from SDSU in 2009 and in 2012 earned his masters of wildlife biology.

He and his family live near Wallace where Kyle says he has a freezer full of his own game that he suspects he'll never get to mount because of his extensive customer list.

Crime

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Burns commented that, as police officers patrol the streets of Webster at night, they notice a number of garage doors that are left open. He said those are essentially invitations to theft.

A string of similarly described burglaries have been cropping up throughout the region, Burns said. From Redfield to Watertown, over into Spink County and beyond. It is not known at this point if all these cases are linked.

Besides the undisclosed number of cases reported in Webster, Burns said at least two or three cases have been reported in Waubay as well. Burns had not heard of any reports from rural Day County.

While this is an ongoing investigation, Burns cautions people to lock their vehicles and close their garage doors to thwart thieves.

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BUFFET STARTING AT 5:30 P.M.
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Silent Auction: 5:30 - 7 p.m. • Live Auction: 7:30 p.m.
Mark Remily Karaoke: 9 p.m.
All proceeds go to the Bristol Swimming Pool

DAY • COUNTY • CHAPTER
DUCKS UNLIMITED BANQUET

Thursday, March 31

The Galley, Hwy. 12, Webster

Social Hour 5:30 p.m.

Dinner starts at 7:30 p.m.

Auction follows

Tickets available at Sturdevant's,
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for ticket information.

\$35 - Single
\$45 - Couple
\$20 - Green Wing

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JESUS

THIS SATURDAY, MARCH 26

5:30 p.m.
FRIENDSHIP POTLUCK
7 p.m.
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WEBSTER ELEMENTARY SCHOOL GYM

JOIN US - THIS WEEK!

design:SD
PROJECT WEBSTER

VISION TEAM GATHERING

1. Get energized for 2016
[90 Day Challenge!]
2. Welcome others to get involved
3. Share new ideas

WED. MARCH 30, 2016
5-6:30 PM
DAY COUNTY COURTHOUSE

Plus, each team will have 1-on-1 time with Joe,
our community coach, to discuss challenges and solutions

MARCH 30

6:45-7:45 PM: Walk/Bike Path Vision Team

MARCH 31

7-8 AM: Marketing/Welcoming Vision Team

8:30-9:30 AM: Main Street Vision Team

10-11 AM: Workforce/Education Vision Team

11:30 AM-12:30 PM: Housing Vision Team

1-2 PM: _____ (open slot)

More details: WebsterSD.com or 345-3159