

24. George ?Pat? Ness, Sr.

63 years old

Iron River

Bayfield County

George Ness bled to death after his wife, Diane Ness, 49, shot him once in the leg with a .22 magnum pistol.

Diane told investigators that she and George had been drinking heavily for almost two days and arguing. She decided to move out and began packing. She told investigators that she did not remember getting the gun or pulling the trigger, but after she shot George he said, "you shot me." Investigators concluded that George was probably asleep or passed out when he was shot because he did not move or make an attempt to stop the bleeding. Police were notified after Diane called her sister, who lived next door, and told her that she had shot George. Investigators determined that enough time passed between the shooting and when Diane called for help for the blood to coagulate and dry, and there were signs that alcohol cans and bottles had been removed. They found Diane outside next to the house, sitting in a fetal position.

One of George's adult sons told police, "I knew this would happen," referring to times in the past when Diane had threatened to kill his father, but would then say she was kidding. George's 15-year-old grandson told investigators that Diane was mean and aggressive toward his grandfather when she was drunk. Diane had called her daughter the afternoon of the homicide to report that there were problems and that she and George were fighting. Diane Ness pled no contest to a charge of Homicide by Intoxicated Use of a Firearm, amended from First-Degree Intentional Homicide. She was sentenced to fifteen years in prison and ten years of extended supervision. She also pled no contest to a charge of Felony Possession of a Firearm (stemming from a previous conviction for operating a vehicle while intoxicated) and was sentenced to five years in prison and three years of extended supervision, to run consecutive with the sentence on the homicide charge.

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