

3. Alan Pies

July 2, 2000

Wisconsin Dells

Adams County

Alan Pies died of a gunshot wound to the chest at a campground near Wisconsin Dells. Pies had been dating Denise Kowalski, 36, for about 2 weeks before he was murdered by her estranged husband, Thomas Kowalski, 45. Thomas fatally shot Alan in the chest and shot and wounded a female friend of Denise's while they were all with friends at a campground near Wisconsin Dells to celebrate the Fourth of July. His two young children, ages eight and ten, were nearby. Denise had left Thomas seven months earlier after 13 years of marriage and a long history of domestic violence.

Thomas had driven from his home in Washington County to find his estranged wife at the campground. Thomas told police he came with the intent of killing his wife and two of her female friends, but Alan Pies was shot when he intervened to protect Denise. Thomas then dragged her by her hair, drove her to another county and repeatedly raped and beat her. Denise tried to escape several times succeeding at least once. But Thomas caught up with Denise, beat her and forced her back to the van hidden in a wooded area. About 20 hours after the incident began, Denise finally persuaded Thomas to give himself up to the Adams County Sheriff's department.

Denise had an active restraining order against Thomas with a firearms restriction. He had threatened her in the past, telling her she "was not safe anywhere". Charges were filed in both Adams and Columbia Counties and included First Degree murder, False Imprisonment, Attempted Homicide, and Sexual Assault. He was sentenced to 65 years in prison with 20 years of extended supervision.

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