

Mother charged with deliberate homicide

By Zachary Franz
Great Falls Tribune

GREAT FALLS, Mont. — Many White Horses, 31, made her initial appearance in Cascade County District Court, where she was charged with deliberate homicide, tampering with evidence and obstructing a peace officer.

Police found James Many White Horses’ badly decomposed body in the trunk of his mother’s car on Friday, after she told officers it was there during an interview at the police department.

Appearing by video link from the Cascade County Detention Center, where she has been held since her arrest Friday afternoon, Many White Horses wore a blue, jail-issue jump suit and kept her head bowed during the brief court proceeding. She seemed to be quietly sobbing.

An initial appearance serves to inform the defendant of the charges that have been filed and his or her rights, such as the right to an attorney. As Judge Dirk Sandefur read the charges, Many White Horses never met his eyes, but replied to each question with a clear, “Yeah.”

Many White Horses said she would need a public defender to represent her in court.

Sandefur set bail at \$250,000, as prosecutors requested.

Deputy district attorney Joel Thompson cited the severity of the charges and Many White Horses’ criminal history in arguing for the high bail.

Many White Horses is a registered violent offender. Her record includes convictions for assault on a peace officer and at least two counts of driving under the influence.

The maximum sentence for deliberate homicide is life in prison. Tampering with evidence, also a felony, is punishable by up to 10 years in prison. Obstructing a peace officer, a misdemeanor, carries a maximum sentence of six months.

Prosecutors filed the tampering with evidence charge because they think Many White Horses hid her son’s body in the trunk of her car, Thompson said. She is charged with obstructing a peace officer because authorities believe she lied about the young boy’s whereabouts, he said.

“There’s been months of deception and false stories about this child’s location ... that delayed the discovery of the victim for so long,” Thompson said.

Many White Horses often moved from place to place, and James frequently stayed with family members, said Taylor Many White Horses, who is the defendant’s mother.

Family members painted conflicting pictures of the woman accused of killing her son.

“She was just a regular mother — she loved her kids,” said Taylor Many White Horses, who lives in Missoula but came to Great Falls after his sister’s arrest. “That’s why it’s such a shock. It’s unbelievable.”

Summer’s aunt, though, had a very different view.

“Me and my mom took care of (James),” said Elissie Buffalo, of Brown-ing. “(Summer) never loved him. She never bonded with him.”

Buffalo said she helped care for James while the boy’s mother was serving a sentence at the Montana Women’s Prison in Billings, but that Many White Horses took custody of the boy “about a year ago.”

Abramoff cheated Greenberg traurig out of fees

John Pacenti
Daily Business Review

FLORIDA — It wasn’t only American Indians who were ripped off by disgraced Republican lobbyist Jack Abramoff. In a sentencing memorandum filed by the Justice Department, prosecutors claimed Abramoff defrauded his employer, Greenberg Traurig, as well.

Abramoff was sentenced last week in Washington to four years in federal prison for fraud, tax evasion and conspiracy to bribe public officials, such as former U.S. Rep. Robert W. Ney, R-Ohio.

Abramoff already is two years into a nearly six-year sentence for another fraud case involving the purchase of the Dania Beach-based SunCruz gambling cruise line.

U.S. District Judge Ellen Huvelle could have sentenced Abramoff to 11 years, but she gave him credit for helping the FBI investigate a number of politicians caught in the lobbyist’s vast influence-peddling scandal.

Abramoff’s two federal sentences will run concurrently.

Greenberg has said much of

Abramoff’s conduct was unknown to the Miami-based law firm until he pleaded guilty in Washington in 2006.

“The acts of Jack Abramoff were illegal and a result of his efforts to deceive his clients and his former firm. He was asked to leave our firm more than four years ago,” Greenberg spokeswoman Jill Perry said. “His plea agreement acknowledges that he defrauded Greenberg Traurig, and the restitution order recognizes that our firm was a victim of his illegal acts.”

Huvelle ordered Abramoff to pay \$15 million in restitution. Perry didn’t have comment regarding any restitution to Greenberg Traurig.

Abramoff cost his former employer plenty, the memo shows.

Abramoff encouraged his lobbying team to conceal the identity of recipients of trips, dinners and other gifts on internal Greenberg Traurig reports to hide the identity of public officials receiving the favors, according to the government sentencing memo.

Also noted, but not in detail, was that Abramoff committed private honest services fraud

against his employer.

“He directed a wireless company to pay lobbying fees due to Greenberg Traurig to Abramoff’s nonprofit, the Capital Athletic Foundation,” the memo states.

A 2005 Senate inquiry found the charity was used to pay for overseas trips for Ney, House Majority Leader Tom DeLay and former Christian Coalition leader Ralph Reed. CAF also was used to funnel large fees from Indian tribes to lawmakers.

Prosecutors say Abramoff asked a tribal client to pay the “vast bulk” of his fees through DeLay aide Michael Scanlon’s public relations firm, Capital Campaign Strategies, which cut fees meant for Greenberg.

Abramoff also convinced the Pueblo of Sandia Indian tribe in New Mexico to hire Scanlon, reducing Greenberg’s proposed fee from \$125,000 to \$50,000 per month.

Because of the Scanlon hire, Greenberg lost its share of the additional fees that might have been paid by the Sandia tribe to Abramoff, depending on the outcome of their negotiations, according to the sentencing memorandum.

The tribe hired Abramoff and Scanlon to lobby on its behalf in a legal dispute related to a mountain revered by the tribe as sacred.

Other times, Abramoff scammed Greenberg Traurig by simply having his lobbyists pad their hours to get higher bonuses, according to prosecutors.

“Lobbyists regularly shifted expenses from one client to another or padded hours in order to make it appear that they performed more work than they actually did, a fact which may have created a false impression about what the lobbyists were actually doing for their nonretainer clients,” the memo states. Perry said she couldn’t comment on the specifics of the fraud or the restitution owed to Greenberg Traurig.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Mary K. Butler outlined the fraud against Greenberg Traurig that first surfaced at a Senate Indian Affairs Committee hearing in 2004. U.S. Sen. Tim Johnson, D-S.D., declared “credible law firms were taken advantage of.”

Not all of the costs associated with Abramoff were mentioned in the sentencing memo, though. The firm negotiated settlements with several of Abramoff’s tribal

clients, such as the Alabama-Coushatta Tribe of Texas, which claimed Abramoff and others took part in a scheme that shut down the tribe’s casino.

Abramoff would tell the tribes -- such as the Tigua -- that he would work for free if they hired Scanlon. “In fact, Abramoff and Scanlon agreed that Abramoff would receive 50 percent of the net profits,” the memo stated.

They would often work against interests of the tribes they represented. For instance, Abramoff and Scanlon represented the Louisiana Coushatta in that tribe’s efforts to close casinos in Texas -- a direct conflict with the interest of the Tigua, who wanted to reopen a casino in El Paso.

The Daily Business Review reported in April that Greenberg Traurig refunded \$324,000 in lobbying fees to Guam to get the island territory to drop felony charges against the firm. The firm faced charges of theft by deception, theft and conspiracy.

Prosecutors say Greenberg became entangled in Guam’s criminal investigation after the fallen lobbyist billed the territory for work on projects he wasn’t hired to pursue

Warm welcoming



Associated Press

People gather at the grave site of MaryAnn Winishut-Meanus, Wednesday, Aug. 20, in Warm Springs, Ore. Winishut-Meanus was a respected elder of the tribe. Her body was buried on the Warm Springs Indian Reservation, in central Oregon, right before daybreak, with her feet facing the rising sun as part of American Indian tradition.

Bristol Bay Native Corp. tops \$1.3 billion in revenue

By Elizabeth Bluemink
Anchorage Daily News

ANCHORAGE, Alaska — The Anchorage-based company posted revenue of \$1.3 billion, up 29 percent, as its Pacific Northwest fuel sales and government contracting businesses showed strong sales growth for its fiscal year, which ended March 31.

But weak returns from its \$89 million stock portfolio continued to depress profits, which totaled \$5 million, down 69 percent from the year before, according to Bristol Bay’s recent annual report.

The company is one of only two Alaska Native corporations that have hit the \$1 billion mark.

Arctic Slope Regional Corp. was the first -- crossing that threshold in 2000.

A couple of others --

NANA Regional Corp. Inc. and Chugach Alaska Corp. -- flirted with the \$1 billion mark last year but didn’t quite hit it.

Bristol Bay’s revenue has tripled in the past three years, largely due to the rapid growth of a commercial fuel sales distributorship it owns in the Pacific Northwest, and, to a lesser extent, its government contract awards.

Fuel sales totaled \$994 million, up 25 percent. Contract revenue -- largely for government services -- reached \$291 million, up 48 percent.

The company called its stock market returns “disappointing.” But the annual report noted that Bristol Bay did make money in the market while the index it benchmarks itself against fell in value.

The reduced profit also

resulted from low profit margins at its fuel distributorship, Petrocard Systems Inc., the company said in its annual report to shareholders.

Bristol Bay Native Corp. represents roughly 8,100 shareholders of Aleut, Eskimo and Athabascan descent who reside in or have roots in the Bristol Bay region of Southwest Alaska.

It is one of 13 regional corporations created under the Alaska Native Claims Settlement Act in 1971. The federal law settled Native claims to most of Alaska’s land, creating the Native-owned companies and seeding them with land and cash.

Bristol Bay owns 30 subsidiary companies, and roughly 13 percent of its employees in Alaska are shareholders.

Another Gun Lake casino delay

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. (AP) — The latest delay in building a casino in Allegan County came from the US Supreme Court.

Chief Justice John Roberts said a stay in building the casino will remain in place on the land while the Supreme Court decides

whether or not to hear the case.

The opposing group, Michgo, wants to keep the property for the casino from being put into trust.

Casino supporters note that in the past, the Supreme Court refused to hear cases such as this.

Jandreau re-elected as Lower Brule chairman

SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) — The longtime chairman of the Lower Brule Tribe has been elected to another two-year term.

Results have been certified and they confirm that Michael Jandreau defeated challenger Sandy LaCroix.

Lower Brule Election Board Secretary Shirley Crane says others elected to lead the tribe include Boyd Gournneau as vice chairman and John McCauley Sr. as secretary-treasurer.

Tribal leaders start their new terms next month.