

## Charges pending against man in sister-in-law's death

Elise Stolte, CanWest News Service;  
Edmonton Journal



Michael Butler says his wife, Stephanie Rae Butler, right, was afraid of his brother.

*Tuesday, April 10, 2007*

EDMONTON - Murder suspect Ken Butler was violent in his holding cell and had outstanding warrants for failing to obey court orders.

He was arrested after his brother reported him banging on the door and trying to break in to his Edmonton bungalow. A justice of the peace later granted him \$300 bail, with only one condition - he stay away from his brother's house.

That's exactly where he was found a day later late Friday, a cab driver's battered body laying nearby and his brother's wife, Stephanie Rae Butler, 25, dead or near death in the house.

Her father wouldn't find her body until Saturday.

"I wanted him to be in jail," said Mike Butler, Ken's brother and Stephanie's husband. "I wanted him to stay in jail and I wanted him to be off the drugs."

Police said Mike Butler told them not to press charges when they first arrested his brother Wednesday, said police spokeswoman Karen Carlson.

But Mike Butler vehemently denies that.

"Oh I most definitely wanted to press charges. I wanted to press charges and I wanted them to call me back and tell me if my brother had been

released."

Police did neither. Carlson said police inform spouses when their husband or wife is released.

"Not in cases like this," she said. "(But) the only possible charge he could have faced would be attempted break and enter."

Ken Butler caused a disturbance while in police custody, Carlson said.

"He also acted up somewhat in cells."

That was taken into account when the justice of the peace put a condition on his release.

He was arrested for a second time Friday night. He got into a police car parked near his brother's house and was arrested after a police dog followed his tracks from the cab to his brother's house and then to him, Carlson said.

But police didn't enter the house to check on Stephanie.

Ken Butler's court records in Alberta were unavailable Monday, but in a Regina court he faced charges of break-and-enter and theft relating to an incident this January.

He lived in Regina, where his family bought him a house, for several months before returning to Edmonton. The Regina charges were stayed, but the reason why was also not available Monday.

The outstanding warrants were for failure to appear, an undefined traffic safety act offense, and a breach of probation, all originating out of Alberta.

"Steph was afraid he would come around and do something stupid," said her mother, Sue Mah Poy.

"I told her she should come stay with me for the weekend, but she said, 'No, no, I'll be OK.' None of us would have ever thought it would come to this."

University of Alberta criminologist Bill Pitt said the justice of the peace who ordered Ken Butler released did nothing out of order.

"The granting of bail is a charter right. The judge was well within his rights to do that," he said. "There's not a whole lot the police can do."

People with the same type of criminal history are released every day, he

added. "In this case nobody could have predicted this."

The cab driver was still in critical condition in hospital Monday.

Carlson said an autopsy on Stephanie Rae Butler is scheduled for this morning.

Charges of murder, break and enter and commit, and breach of recognizance are pending and will be laid after police meet with Crown prosecutors when they return to work today, Carlson said.

[estolte@thejournal.canwest.com](mailto:estolte@thejournal.canwest.com)

Edmonton Journal

© CanWest News Service 2007