



OFFICE OF THE STATE'S ATTORNEY  
MADISON COUNTY, ILLINOIS

157 North Main Street  
Suite 402  
Edwardsville, Illinois 62025

**Thomas D. Gibbons**  
*State's Attorney*

Voice: 618 692-6280  
Facsimile: 618 296-7001

Contact: Stephanie Smith  
618/692-6280

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
July 9, 2012

## PRESS RELEASE

Edwardsville—Madison County State's Attorney Thomas D. Gibbons filed felony charges today against an Edwardsville couple in connection with the drowning death of their toddler son in May.

Two-year-old Lukas C. Pinski was found fully submerged in a small lake on Cherokee Trail in Edwardsville on May 2, 2012, by neighbors. Police were called to the scene following a 911 call that was made by his grandmother around 3:00 p.m. Lukas and his twin brother had wandered away from their home that afternoon; Lukas was found floating in the lake while his brother was found wandering nearby with only a few minor cuts on his body. Lukas was taken to St. Louis Children's Hospital where he died on May 6, 2012.

Emilie R. Pinski (d.o.b. 2/17/87) and Thomas C. Pinski (d.o.b. 5/13/86) were charged today with one count of Endangering the Life or Health of a Child, a Class 3 felony due to the death of the child. An investigation by the Madison County Sheriff's Department following the drowning death of Lukas found that the child was knowingly left unsupervised by his parents and was able to climb out of the house through a basement window into an unfenced yard. The investigation determined that the boys had previously escaped the residence through the same window on multiple prior occasions, but the parents failed to lock the window or remove a bench in front of the window that allowed them to reach it.

Additionally, a Class A Misdemeanor charge of Endangering the Life or Health of a Child was also filed against Emilie and Thomas Pinski as well as Shirley A. Pinski (d.o.b. 1/19/65) and Rebecca S. Kennedy (d.o.b. 9/25/50) for allowing all five children to reside in a home with uninhabitable conditions which included piles of human and animal feces, broken glass, debris and trash. Kennedy and Pinski are the mothers of Emilie and Thomas Pinski and also resided at the home on Cherokee Trail.

Immediately following the incident, a Juvenile Abuse/Neglect case was opened by the State's Attorney's Office. Since that time, the other children in the home (two boys, ages 2 and 5 and two girls, ages 3 and 1) have been in the temporary custody of the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS). The juvenile cases are confidential, therefore no further details will be released.

State's Attorney Gibbons commended the investigative work of detectives with the Sheriff's Department who worked closely with his prosecutors in bringing charges in the matter. "This was

-more-

an extremely difficult case,” said Gibbons. “But when you know that your children are in danger and there is a strong likelihood that something will happen to them, you have to do everything you can to provide a safe environment for them. This family knew the boys were crawling out of the window and wandering away, yet they did nothing, and that’s against the law.” Gibbons further noted the deplorable conditions of the home. “These children lived in filth and squalor.”

Bonds for Emilie and Thomas Pinski were set at \$35,000; bonds for Rebecca Kennedy and Shirley Pinski were set at \$7,500. At the time of the charges being filed, the four defendants were not in custody. The penalty for a Class 3 felony ranges from probation up to 2-5 years in prison; for a Class A misdemeanor, the range is supervision or probation and up to one year in county jail.

These charges, as well as the statements made herein, are based upon probable cause. The defendants are presumed innocent unless proven guilty.

###