

For Immediate Release
May 23, 2011

**WOMAN SENTENCED TO 25-YEARS IN PRISON FOR SECOND
DEGREE MURDER AND CHILD ABUSE CONVICTION**

Defendant Convicted of Killing 3-Year-Old Daughter on Holloman Air Force Base

LAS CRUCES – Today, in federal court in Las Cruces, **Rebecca Christie**, formerly known as Rebecca Wulf, 28, was sentenced to a 25-year term of imprisonment for her conviction on second degree murder and child abuse charges. Christie will serve four-years of supervised release after she completes her prison sentence. Christie was an Alabama resident when she was convicted and remanded into federal custody on November 11, 2009.

United States Attorney Kenneth J. Gonzales said that a federal jury sitting in Las Cruces convicted Christie of murdering and abusing her three-year-old daughter on November 11, 2009 after a three-week trial.

Christie initially was charged with second degree murder and child abuse resulting in death in a two-count indictment filed on March 29, 2007. According to the indictment, the child died of dehydration and malnutrition on January 26, 2006 after being neglected by Christie. On December 5, 2007, Christie and Derek Wulf, who was then Christie's husband and the father of the deceased child, were indicted in a one-count superseding indictment charging the couple with the first degree murder of their daughter. On August 27, 2009, Christie was charged in a five-count second superseding indictment with: Count 1, second degree murder; Counts 2 and 4, child abuse not resulting in death; and Count 3 and 5, child abuse resulting in death. On August 27, 2009, Wulf was charged with child abuse and abandonment offenses in an indictment filed in a separate case.

The trial against Christie on the second superseding indictment commenced on October

26, 2009. According to the evidence at trial, while living on Holloman Air Force Base in New Mexico with Wulf and their three-year-old daughter, Christie caused her daughter's death by depriving her of food and water from January 17, 2006, until the child's death on January 26, 2006. The evidence established that, when emergency responders found the child on January 26, 2006, the child appeared extremely malnourished with every rib and bone in her body protruding from her skin. The medical examiner testified that the child died of severe dehydration and malnourishment, and that it would have taken several days for the child to reach this state of dehydration. An expert in the area of child abuse testified at trial that this was the most severe dehydration case she had ever seen. According to trial testimony, Christie spent hours online in chat rooms and playing World of Warcraft, and showed little interest in her daughter. In online conversations, Christie expressed a desire to start her life over without children. Christie's neglect of her daughter culminated on January 25, 2006, when she left her daughter in a room for 16 hours without food or water. On November 11, 2009, a jury returned a verdict finding Christie guilty on Counts 1, 2, 3 and 5 of the second superseding indictment, and not guilty on Count 4.

On December 7, 2009, Wulf pled guilty to child abuse not resulting in death. In his plea agreement, Wulf admitted neglecting his daughter's health and not adequately monitoring her medical and nutritional needs despite knowing that the child had health problems and special nutritional needs. Wulf was not in the family home when the child died and had not been in the home since January 17, 2006. Wulf's sentencing hearing is scheduled for June 15, 2011 when he faces up to three years of imprisonment and one year of supervised release.

This case was investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Air Force Office of Special Investigations, and was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorneys Maria

Y. Armijo and Nathan J. Lichvarcik.

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