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4/7/2005 - Red Cross Embezzlement

MARQUETTE, Mich. (AP) - A former American Red Cross official who admitted embezzling thousands of dollars from the organization has pleaded guilty. Kimberly Sue Smith, 46, formerly of Hancock, reached a deal with federal prosecutors in Michigan and Indiana and the local prosecutor in Houghton County. She pleaded guilty in federal court today to three counts of wire fraud and one of making a false statement on a loan application. Smith admitted that while serving as executive director of the Western Upper Peninsula Chapter of the Red Cross in 2001-02, she used Red Cross money for personal things and submitted false financial reports to national and regional offices. Some of the money she took was from the "Liberty Fund" set up for the terrorism victims. (Copyright 2005 by The Associated Press. All Rights Reserved.)

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