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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

JOHN RUFÉ ARRESTED FOR HOMICIDE BY VEHICLE, DUI FOR FATAL COLLEGEVILLE CRASH



JOHN RUFÉ

NORRISTOWN, Pa. (Dec. 9, 2020) — Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele and Collegeville Borough Police Chief Barton Bucher announce the arrest of John Rufe, 62, of North Wales, for Homicide by Vehicle, DUI and related charges in the crash that killed 57-year-old Margaret Ann Berman of Trappe, Pa.

On Friday, Nov. 6 at 9:13 p.m., Collegeville Borough Police responded to Main Street and Clamer Avenue for a crash involving a 2018 Ford Mustang and a Range Rover. Both the Mustang driver, John Rufe, and his passenger, Margaret Berman, were entrapped and had to be extricated from the vehicle. Berman was transported to Einstein Hospital Montgomery before being flown by helicopter to Einstein Hospital in Philadelphia, where she was later pronounced dead. Rufe was transported to Paoli Hospital, where he was treated for injuries. The three occupants of the Range Rover, driven by Jamie Mancini, received minor injuries.

The ensuing crash investigation and reconstruction by Montgomery County Detectives and Collegeville Police determined that the Range Rover was traveling east on Main

Street when the Mustang driven by Rufe turned left from a restaurant at 454 Main Street into the westbound lane of Main Street at a high rate of speed. The heavy acceleration applied by Rufe continued as the Mustang proceeded into a slight curve in the roadway, causing the Mustang to lose traction and slide counter-clockwise. The Mustang spun into the eastbound lane facing south when it was struck directly on the passenger side door by the Range Rover.

The crash data retrieved from the Mustang's Airbag Control Module showed that at 1.5 seconds before the crash the vehicle was traveling at 55.7 miles per hour—where the speed limit is 30 miles per hour—and no brakes were applied. Brakes were then applied at one second before impact. The report also indicated that the vehicle's traction control system—which turns on automatically upon ignition in order to prevent the vehicle from going into a spinning side slide during acceleration—had been manually turned off.

Toxicology tests conducted on Rufe's blood showed that his blood alcohol level was .132%. The crash investigation determined that Rufe's level of impairment as well as the speed and manner in which he was operating the Mustang was the cause of the crash that killed Berman and endangered the three occupants of the Range Rover.

Rufe was arrested and charged with Homicide by Vehicle While Under the Influence, DUI, Recklessly Endangerment, Reckless Driving and related charges. He was arraigned by Magisterial District Judge Cathleen Kelly Rebar, who set bail at \$50,000 unsecured. A preliminary hearing is scheduled for 9:15 a.m., Dec. 22, 2020 before Judge Rebar.

The case will be prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Lindsey Mills.

Approved for release:

Kevin R. Steele

CRIMINAL CHARGES, AND ANY DISCUSSION THEREOF, ARE MERELY ALLEGATIONS AND ALL DEFENDANTS ARE PRESUMED INNOCENT UNTIL AND UNLESS PROVEN GUILTY.