

A mind in crisis, a life in peril

Witnesses said Duane Mumm froze as the sport-utility vehicle, pursued by squad cars, bore down on him in a residential neighborhood in Richfield.

**By David Chanen
and Howie Padilla**
*Star Tribune
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Photo provided by family

As he did most days, Duane Mumm came home from work Thursday, pulled on his sweats, and headed out for an afternoon run. Sometimes he ran a full 9 miles, but this day he took his 5-mile loop.

He immediately ran past the things that define him — the Richfield duplex he shared with his wife of 30 years, the snow-free lawn he would soon groom to perfection, the flower garden where he flaunted his green thumb.

He ran down Pillsbury Avenue, through his neighborhood, and eventually back along Nicollet Avenue to a park near busy Cross-town Hwy. 62. Mumm, who had turned 61 the day before, was just three blocks from home when something caught his eye. A green sport-utility vehicle, two Minneapolis police cars and a state trooper had just come off the freeway and were headed right toward him on Nicollet.

As witnesses described it later, Mumm froze, trying to decide what to do.

Before he had started his hour-long run Thursday, the only decision was how far to venture. He took it easy on himself, on the second warmest day so far this year. He was a creature of routine, typically running four to five times a week.

He worked at a Bloomington grocery store five days a week, including Thursday.

The 61-year-old Mumm was out for a run when he was struck and killed by a woman in an SUV.

VICTIM continues on A13:

— *Police inspector said the incident wasn't "your classic pursuit."*

VICTIM from A1

Colleagues describe victim as punctual, dependable

Thursday had started with Mumm donning a pair of tennis shoes, blue Dickies pants, white shirt and tie. Each workday for the past 11 years, he added a green apron to his uniform, except during a few breaks for vacations.

"He was hired as a carryout, but he did so much more," said Maggie Quast, head cashier at Pohland's Supervalu. "He mopped the floors, polished the floors, did general fix-it. . . . You never saw him standing still."

Store manager Dean Hibben said he could almost set his watch to Mumm's 9:25 a.m. arrival. His lunches rarely varied from a half of a sandwich, a serving of yogurt and a piece of fruit, Quast said.

After the end of his shift Thursday, Mumm gave co-worker Bing Norman a ride home. The short conversation they had was nothing out of the ordinary, she said, but she told him that she hoped "that someday I can be just like you."

He got home about 3:30 p.m., had a chat with his wife and went off to run.

A woman in crisis

While Mumm was about a half-hour into his run, Geryaln Mornson was having a crisis. A mental health worker called police because the 38-year-old registered nurse from Chaska was having a psychotic episode in a parking lot outside an office building in southeast Minneapolis about 4:45 p.m., said Minneapolis police Inspector Rich Stanek. She was out of control and potentially suicidal, police said.

"You will need more than one officer," the caller said.

The worker and Mornson's sister and husband tried to talk her into calming down, Stanek said, but it wasn't working. Two officers would usually have responded, but all but one officer in the Second Precinct were on roll call before the shift changed.

As officer Lance DuPaul, who has been on the force for seven years, arrived at the parking lot in the 2500 block of University Av., dispatch was calling the precinct for backup. Cpl. James Brickley, who is specially trained to deal with crises involving people with mental illness, and officer Todd Lappegard, a highly decorated officer, were pulled out of roll call.

Instead of going to their own squad car, they saved precious minutes by hopping into a nearby car reserved for a sergeant. But less than 4 miles away, Mornson had already locked herself into her SUV and driven off. If officers had been able to stop her there, they probably would have taken her to the crisis intervention center at the Hennepin County Medical Center.

"People have three ways to get people to the center: by police, ambulance or family members," Stanek said. "They chose to call police, which is the most intrusive way. It was their last resort."

It's unclear what exactly was happening with Mornson on Thursday that triggered the call to police.

She was a case manager for Allina Health Systems and a vice president of a geriatric case management business before starting English Rose Suites, which provides care for people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementia. Last year, she was named by City Business newspaper as one of the top 40 executives under 40.

"The entire staff at English Rose Suites is saddened by the news and our heart goes out to all families involved," said co-owner Jayne Clairmont.

About the time Mumm was halfway through his run, Mornson was heading down University Avenue to Hwy. 280, never going much faster than 40 miles per hour, Stanek said. Brickley, a 13-year member of the department, and Lappegard, a nine-year member, became the lead squad car in what Stanek said wasn't "your classic pursuit."

Mornson went west on Interstate Hwy. 94 and turned south onto I-35W. The officers had been in constant contact with a supervisor and soon decided to drop back from her SUV and turn off their lights and sirens. They hoped it would calm her down. In order to keep track of her vehicle, police asked for a State Patrol helicopter, but events unfolded too quickly.

Police say they think Morn-

son was trying to evade police as she exited on 60th St. and went to Nicollet. She was driving all over the road, Stanek said, and appeared to be a danger to herself and others. Brickley decided to try to cut in front of her SUV, Stanek said. Some witnesses said that as the squad car pulled alongside, she tried to hit the car. Other witnesses have said the squad car hit her SUV.

Mornson lost control of her vehicle and hit Mumm, who was either standing on a sidewalk or in the street about 5:15 p.m. A witness said he flew about 70 feet into a yard and died.

Both the SUV and the squad car hit trees. Neither Mornson nor the officers suffered serious injuries, but Mornson was admitted to the hospital.

"The mental health system was put in a spot where they didn't think they could handle a situation and put officers in a stressful spot," said Sgt. John Delmonico, president of the Police Officers Federation of Minneapolis. "The cops did everything by the book."

The Friends of Barbara Schneider Foundation, which was named for a mentally ill woman who was killed by police, has suggested that mental health professionals should respond to mental health crises along with police in order to better control the situations.

John Trepp, of the Schneider Foundation, said Friday that he didn't know for sure that the woman who made the call was a registered mental health professional. But if she was, he said, "We've never said that the system would be foolproof."

Trepp added: "We understand that there are times when the best laid plans will not be infallible. If a mental health professional did call police, you can't blame the police for showing up."

The crash is being investigated by the State Patrol. The officers will be on paid administrative leave for three days, which is standard procedure.

Mornson hasn't been arrested or charged with a crime. She couldn't be reached to comment Friday night. Chaska police said they haven't ever been called to her house.

Stanek said that he would be the first one to be critical of the incident, but that it appears the officers were thinking "out of the box" to try to bring it to an uneventful conclusion.

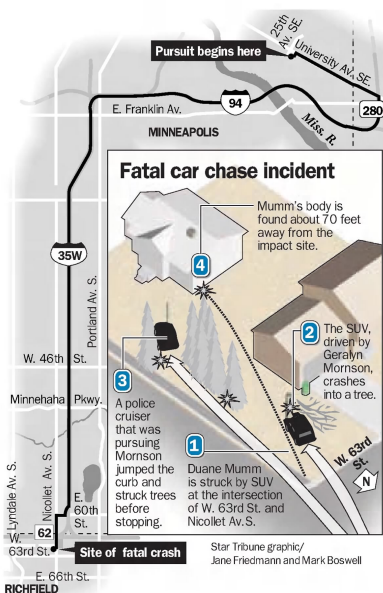
"We may be the subject of criticism, but we were called to the scene; we didn't create it," he said.

Waiting at home

When Mumm still hadn't arrived home at 6:45 p.m. Thursday, his wife, Beverly, called Richfield police to report him missing. At 8:45, police came by her home asking her what he was wearing. Forty-five minutes later, the officer returned with a chaplain and told her Duane had been killed.

On Friday, relatives gathered around Beverly in the couple's Richfield home and talked about what made Mumm happy: his family, his roses, his blue Dodge Dakota pickup and running.

His granddaughter, Lucy Hancock, 14, said he would often come to their home and toss a ball with their dog. It was



Star Tribune graphic/Jane Friedmann and Mark Boswell

a luxury he didn't afford the children in the yard he cared for meticulously.

Lucy said she was half asleep when her father came to her room.

"I thought it was a bad dream," she said.

Like Mumm, son-in-law Chuck Hancock is an avid runner, and they used to compare notes. The next time he goes out will be tough, he said.

But Lucy piped in: "He's not running outside anymore. We have a membership at the Y. He can run there where there's no traffic."

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