

Fleeing driver charged with jogger's death

By Jim Adams

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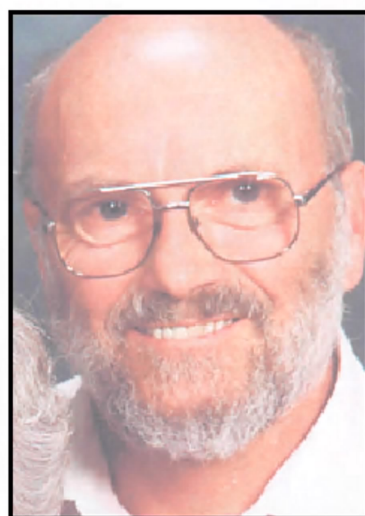
A felony charge was filed Thursday against a Chaska woman who was fleeing Minneapolis police when her sport-utility vehicle struck and killed a Richfield man.

Geralyn E. Mornson hit Duane P. Mumm, 61, on March 28 near 63rd St. and Nicollet Av. S. in Richfield. Mumm, a longtime grocery store employee, had been out jogging.

Mornson, 39, hasn't been arrested. Her first court appearance is set for Sept. 18. Neither she nor Mumm's widow returned calls Thursday.



Geralyn E. Mornson



Duane P. Mumm

CHARGES continues on B6:

— *New details about the chase.*

CHARGES from B1

Woman resisted being taken to the hospital by police

Police went to a counseling center in southeast Minneapolis in response to a report that Mornson was suicidal, out of control and suffering psychotic episodes. According to the criminal complaint filed in Hennepin County District Court, she fled when a police officer tried to take her to a hospital.

After a chase through south Minneapolis, a police car following Mornson "made contact" with the driver's side of her vehicle twice before it ran off the street, hitting Mumm before hitting a tree.

The officer who had responded to the call from the counseling center had called for help from officers trained to handle mentally ill people. Cpl. James Brickley, a crisis intervention team member, was in the squad car driven by officer Todd Lappegaard that forced Mornson off the road.

A police lieutenant who reviews traffic accidents involving police has questioned whether officers violated department policy during the pursuit. Police spokeswoman Cyndi Barrington said Thurs-

day that the officers' driving conduct will be reviewed by the department after State Patrol reports on the case are received. The reports were sent to the Anoka County attorney's office, where prosecutor Paul Young is handling the case to avoid a possible conflict for Hennepin County authorities.

The conflict arose because Mornson, a registered nurse who started an Edina business caring for Alzheimer's disease patients, is a codefendant with Hennepin County in an unrelated lawsuit filed by one of her employees, said a county spokesman.

The complaint gives this account:

When officer Lance DuPaul arrived at the counseling center about 5 p.m. on March 28, Mornson was crying, upset and talking rapidly. Her therapist said she was suicidal and out of control, and suggested that backup officers might be needed to take her to Abbott Northwestern Hospital. DuPaul suggested that she ride with him and her husband in DuPaul's police car, but she refused.

She walked to her SUV and

said she would ride with her husband. She got in the passenger side, then slid across to the driver's seat and took off.

DuPaul followed her down University Avenue to Hwy. 280, where she drove on the shoulder to pass cars lined up at a ramp meter light. She got onto Interstate Hwy. 94 going toward downtown Minneapolis and went south on Interstate Hwy. 35W with police and state troopers following.

Lappegaard caught up, pulled in front of Mornson and tried to slow her down. But she drove across a shoulder to the 60th Street exit ramp.

Lappegaard and his passenger, Brickley, both veteran officers, followed her onto Nicollet Avenue going south. When they saw no oncoming traffic, Lappegaard attempted to force Mornson to stop. The squad car hit her vehicle on the driver's side twice before both vehicles went off the road to the right. Mumm was thrown about 100 feet and died of his injuries.

Mornson is charged with fleeing a police officer in a motor vehicle resulting in death.

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