



OFFICE OF THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY

KEVIN R. STEELE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY

COUNTY OF MONTGOMERY
COURTHOUSE
P.O. BOX 311
NORRISTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
19404-0311

DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE
DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S FAX
COUNTY DETECTIVE BUREAU

(610) 278-3090
(610) 278-3095
(610) 278-3368

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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HOFFMAN CHARGED WITH HOMICIDE BY VEHICLE IN TWO-DEATH CRASH AT SCHUYLKILL CANAL PARK



NORRISTOWN, Pa.--Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin R. Steele and Upper Providence Township Police Chief Mark Toomey announce the filing of two counts of Homicide by Vehicle and other related charges against Robert Bruce Hoffman, 21, of Collegeville in the Oct. 4, 2015 drowning deaths of Clinton Berger, 29, and Lauren Magargal, 25, at Lock 60, Tow Path Road at the Schuylkill Canal Park.

The charges stem from a single-vehicle crash at the park. The investigation by Upper Providence Police and Montgomery County Detectives revealed that the vehicle, a 2007 VW Passat station wagon, had been parked in a pull off area between Tow Path Road and the Schuylkill River. When they were ready to leave, Hoffman drove and backed up the car over the edge of the embankment, causing the car to roll into the canal upside down, landing in about four feet of water. Berger and Magargal were unable to get out of the car and drowned.

Toxicology tests revealed that Hoffman was under the combined influence of marijuana, Clonazepam and alcohol. Additionally, the defendant did not possess a valid driver's license at the time of the crash.

The defendant was arrested and arraigned before Magisterial District Judge Albert J. Augustine. Bail was set at \$10,000 unsecured, with additional restrictions of not driving or consuming any drugs or alcohol. A preliminary hearing was scheduled for 10 a.m., February 4, 2016 before Magisterial District Judge Walter F. Gadzicki, Jr. in Limerick.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant District Attorney Richard Bradbury.

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.