



OFFICIAL MEDIA RELEASE KENT COUNTY SHERIFF DEPARTMENT



Date: September 15, 2017

Complaint Number: 17-245815

Type of Incident: Fatal Hit & Run Traffic Accident

Location: Ritchie Ave N.E. & 15 Mile Road N.E., Courtland Township

Assigned Detective: Bill Marks

Supervisor Approval: Lt. Ron Gates

UPDATE – SEPTEMBER 18, 2017

The victim has been identified as Meranda Baguss, 33 years old. The twin 5 year old boys are still hospitalized in critical condition. On September 17, 2017, the Kent County Prosecutor's Office issued the following charges on Douglas James Crystal, 36 years old from Cedar Springs:

- Failure to Stop at Scene of Accident-When At Fault-Resulting in Death
- Reckless Driving Causing Death
- Failure to Stop at Scene of Accident Resulting in Serious Impairment or Death
- Reckless Driving Causing Serious Impairment of a Body Function

Douglas Crystal was arraigned on September 18, 2017 in the 63rd District Court on the aforementioned charges and is currently held at the Kent County Correctional Facility on a \$500,000 Cash Surety Bond.

ORIGINAL – SEPTEMBER 15, 2017

On 9/15/2017 at approximately 2023 hours Kent County Deputies, Courtland Fire, and Rockford Ambulance responded to a fatal car crash at the intersection of Ritchie Ave Ne and 15 Mile Road NE, Courtland Township. A thirty three old woman from Nelson Township was traveling Westbound 15 Mile with her twin 5 year old boys who were seat belted in car seats in the back of their 2011 Ford Fusion. Their vehicle was struck by a Northbound 2015 F150 pickup. The driver of the Fusion was pronounced dead at the scene. Her two children were transported to Helen DeVos Children's Hospital with life threatening injuries.

The driver of the pickup fled the scene on foot after the collision. Deputies searched the area with multiple canine units and were assisted by the Michigan State Police Helicopter for several hours. The suspect remains at large. Alcohol may have been a factor. The investigation is ongoing. Names are not being released pending family notifications.

If anyone has information about this accident please call 616 632-6100 or Silent Observer at 616-774-2345