



## Pittsfield Charter Township

### Department of Public Safety

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# MEDIA RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10/5/2021

**TYPE OF INCIDENT: Homicide**

**DATE OF INCIDENT:** Thursday, August 27, 2020

**TIME:** 11:18 PM

**LOCATION:** 7900 Block of Crane Road, Pittsfield Twp.

**POLICE COMPLAINT NUMBER:** 20-9823

**INFORMATION:** Pittsfield Township Police officers were dispatched to a death investigation in August of 2020. Family reported that, Andrew Nelson, age 76, had passed away. During the on-scene investigation, officers noted numerous dogs and cats in the home, fecal matter throughout the home, and possible flooding in the basement. The Huron Valley Humane Society was contacted and launched an investigation into the residents regarding animal abuse. A subsequent search warrant at the home led to the recovery for 45 dogs and cats in neglected conditions that were removed by HVHS. Washtenaw County Medical Examiner conducted an autopsy on Andrew Nelson and noted indicators of neglect. The Medical Examiner and Pittsfield Township Police conducted an on-going investigation and the Medical Examiner's office ruled the death of Andrew Nelson as a manner of homicide. In July 2021, the Washtenaw County Prosecutor's Office authorized charges against the primary caregiver in Andrew Nelson's death as well as animal and child abuse charges. Two other residents of the home were charged with the crimes indicated. All defendants have been arraigned and are pending court proceedings.

**VICTIM:** Andrew Nelson, 76-year-old Pittsfield Township resident

**SUSPECT(S): Karen Wibbeler-Nelson, Pittsfield Township Resident**

- Open Murder, a felony punishable by up to life in prison
- Vulnerable Adult Abuse – 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a felony punishable by 4 years in prison and/or \$5,000 fine
- Animals – Abandoning/Cruelty to 10 or more, a felony punishable by 4 years in prison, \$5,000 fine, community service, or any combination
- Child Abuse – 4<sup>th</sup> Degree, a misdemeanor punishable by 1 year in jail or probation up to 5 years

**SUSPECT(S): Robert Nelson, Pittsfield Township Resident**

- Vulnerable Adult Abuse – 2<sup>nd</sup> Degree, a felony punishable by 4 years in prison and/or \$5,000 fine
- Animals – Abandoning/Cruelty to 10 or more, a felony punishable by 4 years in prison, \$5,000 fine, community service, or any combination
- Child Abuse – 4<sup>th</sup> Degree, a misdemeanor punishable by 1 year in jail or probation up to 5 years

**SUSPECT(S): John Michael Stewart, Pittsfield Township Resident**

- Animals – Abandoning/Cruelty to 4 to 10 animals, a felony punishable by 2 years in prison, \$2,000 fine, community service, or any combination

**INJURIES:** Fatal

- **CONTACT PERSON:** Matthew Harshberger, Director of Public Safety 734-822-4921