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Manslaughter ruling in girlfriend's death

Jury finds Ouellette guilty of lesser 2nd-degree charge

By Justin Muszynski
HARTFORD COURANT

A Connecticut man has been found guilty of second-degree manslaughter in the death of his 17-year-old girlfriend who prosecutors say was run down by his pickup truck in Burlington in 2023.

Cooper Ouellette, 21, was found guilty of a lesser charge of second-degree manslaughter and delivering alcohol to a minor after a jury deliberated for less than three hours on Friday in New Britain Superior Court.

Ouellette had been charged with first-degree manslaughter in connection with the death of Sophie Ringquist, who was a junior at Lewis Mills High School. He chose not to take the stand in his own defense.

As the jury read its not guilty verdict to the more serious charge, a gasp could be heard from Ringquist's family while Ouellette's family let out a sigh of relief. When the jury foreperson read the guilty verdict to the two other counts, Ouellette's mother put her face in her hands and began crying.

Members of Ringquist's family also were overcome with emotion and shed tears. Ouellette, who did not appear to have much of a reaction, was led away in handcuffs shortly after the verdict when Judge Chris Pelosi raised his bond to $200,000 — which can only be posted at the courthouse.

Outside the courthouse, both families declined to comment.

The jurors ignored reporters' requests for comment about the verdict.

Jonathan Raad, one of Ouellette's attorneys, also declined to discuss the verdict or the differences between the manslaughter charges.

"It's kind of a long day, I don't really feel like doing that now," Raad said as he exited the courthouse.

Raad said he anticipates that Ouellette will be able to post his bond before facing sentencing, which is scheduled for Jan. 12.

The six-person jury — which was made

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Wet and mild



Above: A pedestrian walks beneath the honey locust trees along Trumbull Street on Friday in front of PeoplesBank Arena in Hartford, using an umbrella to stay dry as rain falls.
Left: A pedestrian stays dry while crossing Court Street in Middletown.

AARON FLAUM/ HARTFORD COURANT PHOTOS

Ritter's future remains uncertain

Question about UConn presidency still open

By Christopher Keating
HARTFORD COURANT

House Speaker Matt Ritter received the endorsement from his caucus Thursday night for an historic fourth term leading the chamber, but Ritter's future remains uncertain.

Ritter has been approached about becoming the interim president of the University of Connecticut, and legislators and staff have been speculating in recent days about his future.

Ritter would replace Radenka Maric if she accepts a position at another university instead of remaining at UConn. Maric's current contract expires on June 30, 2027, for a job where annual compensation can reach more than $800,000, and the trustees did not agree on a long-term extension of her five-year deal, officials said. Maric's name has been mentioned as a

See **RITTER** on Page A2



Ritter



Maric

UConn president finalist for leader role at University of Wisconsin-Madison

By Livi Stanford
HARTFORD COURANT

UConn's future leadership remains unclear as UConn President Radenka Maric is being considered for positions at three other universities. The university's Board of Trustees and Maric mutually agreed earlier this year to delay her contract as president of the flagship university.

Maric is among three finalists to become chancellor of the University of Wisconsin's flagship campus in Madison and is scheduled to participate in a public forum on Nov. 13 at the university.

Maric's current contract expires on June 30, 2027, for a job where annual compensation can reach more than $800,000, and the Board of Trustees has yet to vote or discuss an extension of her five-year deal, officials said. Maric's name has been mentioned also as a possibility for positions at two other universities around the country, officials said.

House Speaker Matt Ritter has been approached about becoming the interim president of the University of Connecticut and legislators and staff have been speculating in recent days about his future.

While Ritter received the endorsement from his caucus Thursday for a historic

See **MARIC** on Page A2

Wiles exits, Miller in as chief of staff

Trump promotes key deputy behind deportation agenda

By Seung Min Kim
ASSOCIATED PRESS

WASHINGTON — President Donald Trump said Friday that Stephen Miller was replacing Susie Wiles as White House chief of staff, mere days after Republicans lost control of Congress in the midterm elections.

Miller, long a key member of Trump's inner circle, is a key architect of the administration's hard-line immigration policies. He is one of Trump's closest and longest-serving advisers, jumping on board during his long shot 2016 presidential campaign as a speechwriter. He currently serves as White House deputy chief of staff.

Miller is also a former aide to immigration hard-liner former Sen. Jeff Sessions, R-Ala., who served as Trump's first attorney general.

Wiles gave Trump her resignation on Thursday night, a person familiar with the events said, speaking on condition of anonymity to describe the private conversation. On his social media site, Trump praised Wiles and said she'd continue to work for his political organization.

Wiles also released a statement Friday.

"Serving President Trump in the White House has been the honor of a

See **MILLER** on Page A2



Stephen Miller and Susie Wiles attend the G7 summit in Kananaskis, Canada. **MARK SCHIEFELBEIN/AP 2025**

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