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NEWS FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Wisconsin DOJ Announces Charges in 1985 Murder of Benny Scruggs

WISCONSIN RAPIDS, Wis. – The Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) has filed charges in the cold case homicide of Benny Scruggs which occurred in July of 1985. Donald Wayne Maier, age 60, has been charged with First Degree Murder.

“Wisconsin DOJ is proud to work with law enforcement agencies across the state to pursue justice,” said AG Kaul. “Thank you to the prosecutors, investigators, and scientists whose tireless work has resulted in this 37-year-old case being charged.”

On July 17, 1985, twenty-nine-year-old Benny Scruggs was stabbed to death in his home on Travis Drive in Wisconsin Rapids. Police were dispatched based on a call from a neighbor who was alerted by Scruggs’ wife Yvonne.

The Wisconsin Rapids Police Department has led this investigation through the years, with assistance Wisconsin Department of Justice (DOJ) Division of Criminal Investigation, Division of Legal Services, and the Wisconsin State Crime Laboratory. The investigation lay dormant until the accused brought the matter back to the attention of the police in March of 2012 and the investigation has proceeded apace since then.

As in any criminal proceeding, Mr. Maier is presumed innocent until proven guilty.

The Criminal Litigation Unit of the Division of Legal Services of Wisconsin DOJ is handling the prosecution and is unable to comment beyond what is contained within the complaint or stated in court, because this is an ongoing criminal prosecution.

Initial appearance is scheduled in Wood County Circuit Court for Friday, September 9, 2022, at 1:30 PM.

No further details are available at this time.