



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**FIRST CONFIRMED DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOMICIDE OF 2019**

Saint Paul, MN – Blue flags, banners, and yard signs that read “Live Free Without Violence” will be on display this week to honor the life of Julie A. Kneifl, the first confirmed victim of domestic violence homicide of 2019. The Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women leads the “Live Free Without Violence” public awareness campaign with the support of hundreds of agencies, organizations, and individuals across the state.

Julie A. Kneifl, 72, was killed by her husband, Harvey Kneifl, 72, on or about January 30, in their Woodbury home. Law enforcement arrived to the house on the morning of January 31, after Harvey failed to appear at a scheduled court hearing. He was on trial for ten felony counts of second-degree criminal sexual conduct for groping multiple children while they rode the school bus he drove. On the night of January 30, Harvey stabbed Julie in the neck in their bathroom; after she died, he used the same knife to stab himself in the neck in an attempt to kill himself. When officers arrived the next morning they found Julie’s body and Harvey unconscious. He later told officers that he killed his wife to help her “get to heaven.” Julie suffered from Alzheimer’s disease for the last four years. Harvey Kneifl has been charged with second-degree murder.

“When it is a homicide of an older person who has health issues, the murder is often characterized as an act to put someone out of their suffering. A lot of work has been done over the years to accurately label so called ‘mercy killings’ as what they truly are: domestic violence,” said Liz Richards, executive director of the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women. “These incidents are final acts of power and control in a relationship, not acts to end suffering.”

For more information about the Live Free Without Violence campaign and domestic violence, contact Joe Shannon at [jshannon@mcbw.org](mailto:jshannon@mcbw.org) or visit the Minnesota Coalition for Battered Women’s website at [www.mcbw.org](http://www.mcbw.org). If you are a victim experiencing abuse, contact Day One at 866-223-1111 to connect with services.

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