

# Union Township Man charged with Murder of Cranford woman

A Union Township man has been charged with first-degree murder in connection with the death of a Cranford woman earlier this week, acting Union County Prosecutor Grace H. Park announced Thursday.

Matthew Ballister, 43, of Mercer Avenue in Union Township is being held on \$2 million bail set by state Superior Court Judge Robert J. Mega.

An intensive joint investigation involving the Union County Homicide Task Force and the Union Township Police Department revealed that Ballister killed 43-year-old April Wyckoff sometime Tuesday evening, according to investigators. Based on evidence obtained during the course of the investigation, the incident that led to Wyckoff's death is believed to have occurred at Ballister's home.

As of late Thursday morning, Wyckoff's body had yet to be recovered. Ballister's mother, Eleanor Schofield of Mountainside, has been charged with fourth-degree hindering apprehension for allegedly interfering with the investigation by attempting to assist in his efforts to conceal evidence of the crime.

Anyone with information about Wyckoff's death, or anyone who may have had contact with Ballister or Schofield anytime between Tuesday night and Wednesday night, is being urged to contact Union County Prosecutor's Office Detective Robert Henderson at 908-527-4126 or 908-347-2686.

These criminal charges are mere accusations. Each defendant is presumed innocent until proven guilty in a court of law.