



OFFICE OF THE SHERIFF, Stephenson County

Steven M. Stovall, Sheriff

For Immediate Release
March 30th, 2023

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FATAL TRAFFIC CRASH INVESTIGATION

On March 30th, 2023, at approximately 5:43am, Stephenson County Sheriff's Office personnel responded to the area of N. Davis Road approximately ½ mile north of Walnut Grove Road in rural Davis Illinois for a report of a two-vehicle traffic crash.

Upon arrival, it was determined that both vehicles involved in the crash rolled over and the driver of one of them, a 51-year-old Davis Illinois man, was ejected and located in a field on the east side of Davis Rd. Davis Fire Protection District personnel immediately began life-saving measures, but he unfortunately passed away at the scene. The driver of the other vehicle, Darion Wheeler, aged 19 of Freeport, sustained serious but non-life threatening injuries and was transported to an area hospital by ambulance. Darion Wheeler was eventually transferred by helicopter to a different hospital for a higher level of care.

The results of the preliminary investigation indicate that a southbound vehicle driven by Darion Wheeler crossed the roadway center line and collided head-on with the decedent's vehicle which was northbound on Davis Rd. Driving while impaired is believed to be a factor in this traffic crash and criminal charges are possible following a review of the completed investigation by the Stephenson County State's Attorney's Office.

At the time of this release, Darion Wheeler remains hospitalized for treatment of his injuries. The name of the decedent is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

The Stephenson County Sheriff's Office would like to acknowledge assistance with this incident that has been provided by the Davis Fire Protection District, the Stephenson County Coroner's Office, and the Illinois State Police Traffic Crash Reconstruction Unit.

Any charges referenced are merely accusations and the public is reminded that all defendants are presumed innocent and entitled to a fair trial, at which the government has the burden of proving guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

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