



JACKSON COUNTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Tuesday, August 18, 2015

CARBONDALE MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO AGGRAVATED DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE INVOLVING A DEATH

Michael C. Carr, Jackson County State's Attorney, announced today that a Carbondale resident, Seth Loyd, age 23, pled guilty to one count of Aggravated Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol involving the death of Matthew Dierker.

On November 14, 2014, at approximately 3:20 p.m., the Carbondale Police Department was dispatched to the intersection of Old Highway 13 and Bigler Road in Carbondale, Jackson County, Illinois, in regards to an accident involving a vehicle and a bicyclist. Upon arriving at the scene, officers located the bicyclist, identified as Matthew Dierker, age 33, lying unconscious on the left side of Old Highway 13.

Two witnesses informed officers that they were heading westbound on Old Highway 13 behind a 1997 green Ford Escort. As they approached the intersection with Reed Station Road and Old Highway 13, the green Escort was weaving from the center lane to the shoulder, crossing onto the gravel shoulder, and varying its speed. They said a short time later the vehicle struck the victim, who was on his bike on the gravel shoulder, causing the victim to strike the windshield of the vehicle.

Another witness stated that she was traveling eastbound on Old Highway 13, when she saw the green Escort begin to pass the victim. The vehicle began to swerve into the center of the road and then corrected back across the westbound lane and struck the victim.

Officers identified the driver of the Ford Escort as the defendant, Seth Loyd. At the scene, officers noticed a strong odor of alcohol coming from the defendant's breath and that his eyes were bloodshot and glassy. The defendant told the officers that "he was not going to lie, and that he was guilty of a DUI right now." The defendant also told the officers that he was texting his mother when he struck the victim and that he did not see the victim on his bike prior to impact. The defendant then told officers that he had gotten drunk the night before and had a couple more drinks when he got up that day, and that he had been up for about an hour.

The defendant was then taken into custody and transported to Memorial Hospital of Carbondale, where he voluntarily gave a blood sample. Tests conducted by the Illinois State Police Crime Lab on that blood sample revealed that the defendant had a blood alcohol content of .207.

After providing the sample, the defendant was taken to the Carbondale Police Department where he again admitted to drinking earlier in the day and that he was texting when the accident occurred. He also provided a breath sample which revealed a blood alcohol content of .174.

The victim, whose heart stopped at the scene, but was revived, was transported to Memorial Hospital of Carbondale for treatment. Upon his arrival, it was discovered that he had severe head trauma, a broken neck and back, and multiple fractures in the ribs and he was air lifted to Barnes- Jewish Hospital in St. Louis, Missouri.

Upon the victim's arrival at Barnes-Jewish Hospital, doctors determined that Mr. Dierker's brain was medically dead. At 7:55 a.m. on November 15, 2014, he was pronounced dead from the injuries that he suffered from the accident.

On November 17, 2014, the Jackson County State's Attorney's Office charged the defendant with multiple counts under alternative theories: two Counts of Reckless Homicide, both Class 3 Felonies, carrying a possible two to five years' imprisonment; two counts of Aggravated Driving Under the Influence involving a Death, both Class 2 Felonies carrying from three to 14 years' imprisonment; one count of Operating an Uninsured Motor Vehicle, a Business Offense; one count of Use of an Electronic Communication Device, a Petty Offense; and one count of Expired Registration, also a Petty Offense.

On August 18, 2015, the defendant pled to one count of Aggravated Driving Under the Influence, a Class 2 Felony and the most serious charge. The remaining counts are to be dismissed. The defendant is eligible to receive up from three (3) to fourteen (14) years in the Illinois Department of Corrections. The defendant is eligible to receive probation, but only on a finding of extraordinary circumstances by the Court. A sentencing date has not been set at this time.

The investigation was conducted by the Carbondale Police Department. Assistant State's Attorney Patrick Brewster was responsible for the prosecution of this case.