

Driver on wrong side of road reported to cause death of Scottsburg Wal-Mart greeter

Written by George Browning

Friday, 28 December 2012 00:00 - Last Updated Thursday, 10 January 2013 13:43

A fatal crash in Washington County on Christmas Eve night, December 24, killed an 82-year-old employee of the Scottsburg Wal-Mart.

Dean Shepherd of Salem was driving home on State Road 56 after leaving the Wal-Mart, where he had been employed for the last seven years as a door greeter. At the intersection of S.R. 56 and Shields Road, Shepherd's 2008 Kia was struck head-on by a 1993 GMC Jimmy operated by Gilbert L. Mullis, 37, Bloomington.

The collision caused Shepherd to die at the scene of internal injuries. Mullis survived the crash and was transported to the Washington County hospital in Salem for treatment of undisclosed injuries. He allegedly showed signs of inebriation at the scene, according to the Washington County Sheriff's Department.

The Washington County department had received information from another motorist who apparently encountered Mullis prior to the accident and reported his erratic driving. Shortly after receiving that call, the Sheriff's Department got another, this time reporting the crash at S.R. 56 and Shields Road. The Jimmy was reportedly headed eastbound in the westbound lane of the highway.

Shepherd was pronounced dead at the scene by Washington County Coroner Rondale Brishaber.

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After his release from the hospital, Mullis was placed into custody and taken to the Washington County Jail on Thursday, December 27.

According to the Washington County Clerk's office, charges pending against him include operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated and causing death, a Class B felony; operating a motor vehicle while intoxicated (OVI) with prior conviction, a Class D felony; OVI as a Class A misdemeanor; reckless homicide, a Class C felony; and one count each of criminal recklessness and false informing, both Class A misdemeanors.

All of these charges were to be filed on Friday morning, December 28, in Washington Superior Court. Mullis was expected to appear for an initial court hearing and enter a plea that day as well.

Mullis is now under a 15-day hold order. Washington County Prosecutor Dustin Houchin requested the petition for detention and/or greater-than-standard bond and received approval of same by the Court on Thursday, December 27. Mullis was reportedly on probation in connection with a criminal case in Monroe County at the time of the fatal accident.

The man's bond has been set at \$100,000 corporate surety or full cash.