

Well-known Edwardsville area business owner dies after motorcycle-car crash

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - A well-known Edwardsville/Glen Carbon area man died following a motorcycle-car crash early Friday morning at Illinois Route 157 and Center Grove Road, just across from the McDonald's and close to Edwardsville High School.

The man - Gary Cross - was transported by an ARCH helicopter to a St. Louis area hospital from the scene. Edwardsville Police Chief Jay Keeven confirmed Friday night the man's name and that he had died from injuries suffered in the accident. Cross was operating the motorcycle at the time of the crash. The original call to first responders came in at 7:42 a.m. Friday about the accident.

Chief Keeven said Cross was one of the owners of Cross Auto Body & Towing in Edwardsville. Keeven said those in the other vehicle were not seriously injured in the crash and the car driver was a teenager.

Keeven said the accident is under investigation and full details of the crash and what happened are not yet available. The intersection of Illinois Route 157 and Center Grove Road was blocked for several hours while reconstruction work at the scene was done. Both the motorcycle and the car remained in their final position following the accident during that reconstruction. Traffic was blocked and diverted by police during the reconstruction work and Keeven said a drone flew above for additional aerial footage of the crash.

He said the work in this type of accident is intricate and exact measurements, speeds, etc., will be able to be calibrated to determine the cause of the accident.

Gary operated the business with his brothers Terry and Craig and the company offers auto body repair, painting, towing, roadside assistance and much more at Cross Auto Body & Towing. In 2016, the business celebrated its 40th anniversary and is a very successful Edwardsville area business.

Chief Keeven said the Edwardsville Police Department extends its sympathies to the Cross family and the driver of the vehicle and other involved in the accident and that they are in the department's thoughts and prayers.

One man in a Facebook post in one of the morning edglenetoday.com/Riverbender.com stories said of Gary Cross: "A very dear friend of mine. I am saddened beyond words."

Another said this of Gary: "One heck of a good man. Super sweet. Prayers and sympathy."

Edwardsville Breakers head swim coach Bob Rettle said because he drives older vehicles, Gary towed his cars multiple times over the years.

"He was a good man," Rettle said of Cross. "All of us who drive older cars and have problems with them know him. He was a good man. He helped a lot of people."