

Madison County Coroner positively identifies deceased man found in river

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE - The identity of the man's body recovered Thursday, Sept. 7, 2017, from the Mississippi River in Alton has been positively identified as Scoria C. Johnson, 39, of East St. Louis, by the Madison County Coroner's Office.

Johnson, a black male, had been the subject of a river search since approximately 5:55 p. m. on Monday, September 4, 2017, near Grafton. The decedent was boating with other friends when the boat ran aground on a sandbar. Johnson had exited the craft to free it

and as the boat drifted away, he was swept under the water. Friends attempted to rescue the decedent to no avail, the coroner's office said.

The deceased man's body was observed floating in the river and reported to authorities. The body was recovered by the Alton Fire Department Marine Unit. Johnson was formally pronounced dead by Coroner's Investigator Chris Hartman at 12:20 p.m. on Sept. 7, 2017.

The coroner's office said background investigation revealed that the decedent could not swim. He was not wearing a personal flotation device at the time of the incident.

The findings of an autopsy performed this afternoon were consistent with drowning. Routine toxicology testing for the presence of alcohol and drugs will be performed.

The incident and death was also investigated by Missouri State Highway Patrol, Illinois Department of Natural Resources, and the Alton Police Department.

Funeral arrangements will be under the direction of Serenity Memorial Chapel in Belleville.