

Motorcycle Victim Dies After Monday Crash, Gibbons Files Drunk Driving Charges Against Erin L. Arras Of Belleville

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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EDWARDSVILLE — Madison County State's Attorney Tom Gibbons announced today he filed charges in a fatal drunk driving crash that occurred on Labor Day against Erin L. Arras (d.o.b. 5/28/76) of Belleville. Arras was charged with aggravated driving under the influence causing death, a non-probational Class 2 felony.

On September 7, 2020, the Alton Police Department was dispatched to the scene after reports of a car striking a motorcycle after pulling out of the parking lot of Abbott Machine Co, 700 W. Broadway, Alton.

The victim, who was a passenger on the motorcycle, Natasha J. Dillinger (d.o.b. 10/9/92), of Bethalto, died Wednesday afternoon, Sept. 9, 2020, from the injuries caused by the reckless decisions the defendant made when getting behind the wheel of the vehicle intoxicated.

The motorcycle operator which carried Dillinger was also hurt in the crash. The motorcycle driver's condition is not being released. The defendant has a previous DUI in St. Clair County from 2010.

"Today we are sad to report the loss of a 27-year-old woman who had a full life ahead of her. This is yet another example of the continued action needed to bring attention to motorcyclists and invoke harsher penalties for those who choose to drive intoxicated. My thoughts and prayers go to the loved ones of Ms. Dillinger," said First Assistant State's Attorney Crystal Uhe.

Madison County State's Attorney Tom Gibbons recognized the quick action of the Alton Police Department and medical team who worked hard to provide life-saving treatment to the victim. Assistant State's Attorney Andrew Thierry was also commended for quickly charging the defendant following the passing of the victim.

Gibbons offered a strong message to the public: "Every year around Labor Day Weekend, we warn of the dangers of drunk driving and the horrific aftermath it can cause. This is a message to people who consider getting behind the wheel while intoxicated, that there will be consequences, you will receive Madison County justice. My sincerest condolences go to the family and friends of Ms. Dillinger."

Arras is being held at the Alton Police Department and is awaiting transfer to Madison County Jail. Her bond was set at \$500,000 bond set by Circuit Judge Richard Tognarelli. If convicted of the Class 2 felony, the sentencing range under Illinois law is 3-14 years in the Illinois Department of Corrections.

The charge is non-probational. This charge, as well as the statements made herein, are based upon probable cause.

The defendant is presumed innocent unless proven guilty.