

# **Haine Announces 9-Year Prison Term For Granite City Driver Who Crashed Into Home, Killing Woman**

by Brian Brueggemann  
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EDWARDSVILLE - Madison County State's Attorney Thomas A. Haine announced Friday that a driver who crashed his pickup into a Granite City home, killing an occupant of the house, has been sentenced to nine years in prison.

Jonathan M. Beasley, 48, of Granite City received the sentence in connection with a crash that claimed the life of Virginia Ohren, 74. On July 5, 2021, Beasley crashed his

pickup into Ohren's home on Joy Avenue in Granite City. Her body was pinned by the truck. Beasley's blood-alcohol level was 0.255 percent. In Illinois, a driver is considered intoxicated at 0.08 percent.

"This tragedy was totally preventable," Haine said. "Virginia Ohren meant so much to her family and to her community. We hope that the resolution of this case provides some closure for her loved ones."

Ohren, who worked at the steel mill in Granite City for 32 years, was recalled as a generous member of her church who taught Bible classes for children, helped clean the church, paid visits to residents of nursing homes, and gave monetary gifts to the needy. Victim-impact statements submitted to the court included one from a 99-year-old woman who said Ohren provided transportation to the woman's doctor appointments.

"She was a lifeline for me – a compassionate friend I could depend on all the time," the woman wrote in her statement. "She had a servant's heart and never took advantage of anyone."

Police who arrived at the scene found Beasley standing next to the truck, inside Ohren's home. According to police reports, Beasley told an officer he was home, and invited the officer to come inside.

When an officer asked Beasley if he knew who resided in the house, Beasley responded, "Yeah, I (expletive) live here ... mind your own (expletive) business."

Granite City Police, through an investigation, determined that Beasley had been visiting various bars during the evening.

Assistant State's Attorney Susan Jensen sought a 12-year prison term at Beasley's recent sentencing hearing. Beasley had previously pleaded guilty to the charge of aggravated DUI resulting in death, but the plea agreement did not include a sentence.

The sentence for Beasley, therefore, was left to the judge.

Haine said the conviction was the result of thorough work by Jensen, Granite City Police, Illinois State Police, Metro East Crash Assistance Team, Granite City Fire Department and Madison County Coroner's Office.

Haine also thanked the numerous witnesses who provided information, including neighbors and medical personnel.