

Goetten, Harp react to charges being filed in Carol Admire's death on bike

by Dan Brannan, Content Director
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JERSEY COUNTY - Carol R. Admire's death in a bike accident on May 23 on the Great River Road has stirred considerable discussion and controversy.

On Monday, the next step in the case occurred when **Jersey County State's Attorney Ben Goetten** announced that charges of Aggravated DUI (alcohol or drugs) and Reckless Homicide have been filed against **Kajavion M. McCarvey, 21, of East Alton**. Goetten said the charges were filed after the evidence was gathered from the toxicology reports of McCarvey on that tragic day.

The incident occurred in late May when the truck McCarvey was driving allegedly drove off the roadway and hit 65-year-old Carol R. Admire. Admire died from the injuries she suffered in the accident.

Admire and McCarvey were both heading south toward Alton when the incident happened. The Aggravated DUI charge has a sentence of probation to 14 years in prison, while the Reckless Homicide charge is punishable by 2-5 years in prison. Bond is set at \$75,000.

Goetten said he has been in contact with Admire's family and said they have been wonderful and understanding to this point before charges were announced.

"If we can lend any closure to her death, that is what we want to do," he said. "If something positive can come out of a horrible situation like this for cyclist safety, that seems to be something the family would be proud of."

Tom Harp, owner of Wild Trak Bikes in Alton and also an activist for a memorial for Admire, said he is thankful for how the Jersey County State's Attorney's office has taken this case seriously and investigated the situation thoroughly.

He said he feels the state's attorney's office has its hands tied in regard to maximum penalties that can be imposed in this type of case.

"Obviously the facts came out and clearly the state's attorney felt there was a cause to charge him with such offenses," Harp said. "Unfortunately, the Aggravated DUI offense can carry a much larger sentence than taking someone's life. The man charged has the opportunity to get minimum probation and up to 14 years for the Aggravated DUI and a minimum of two years and maximum of five years for causing the loss of life. That is ridiculous in my own head."

"As a society, we are very lenient toward intoxicated drivers. There are several still out driving the streets with multiple DUIs on their record. They pay a few hundred dollars and have charges dropped. In European countries, they pay for the privilege of driving. Some pay up to \$1,000 to get a driver's license. A lot more respect goes into operating an automobile in other countries. In some of those countries, with one DUI offense, you are done driving."



Goetten said he started cycling about a year ago and he said he now feels more aware of the dangers for cyclists.

“We live in such a beautiful area of Illinois and I believe our cyclists should be able to take advantage of where we live,” he said. “Cyclists are something motorists will have to get used to, just like motorcyclists.”

These are the counts issued by Jersey County state's attorney in the case:

Count I

That on or about May 23, 2015, in Jersey County, Illinois, Kajavion Marquis McCarver committed the offense of Aggravated Driving Under the Influence of Alcohol and/or Drugs, in that said defendant knowingly drove a 1990 Chevrolet carryall bearing Illinois registration 40438L south on State Highway 100, North of Stanka Lane, Godfrey, Jersey County, Illinois, while the defendant was under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs, causing an accident that resulted in the death of Carol R. Admire, in violation of Chapter 625, Act 5, Section 11-501 (d) (1) (F), as enhanced by Chapter 625, Act 5, Section 11-501 (d) (2) (G) of the Illinois Compiled Statutes.

Count II

That on or about May 23, 2015, in Jersey County, Illinois, Kajavion Marquis McCarver committed the offense of Reckless Homicide, in that said defendant, while acting in a reckless manner, performed acts likely to cause the death of or great bodily harm to some individual in that he operated a motor vehicle south on State Highway 100, North of Stanka Lane, Godfrey, Jersey County, Illinois, while the vehicle said defendant was driving, a 1990 Chevrolet carryall bearing Illinois registration 40438L, knowingly had a faulty steering column causing the steering wheel to move up and down and side to side, in an unsafe manner, while at the same time, said defendant had cannabis and Xanax in this blood, causing the safety of persons upon the roadway to be placed in harm's way, causing his motor vehicle to strike the person of Carol R. Admire, thereby causing the death of Carol R. Admire, in violation of Chapter 720, Act 5, Section 9-3 (a) of the Illinois Compiled Statutes.

Harp mentioned his roadside memorial at the location of Admire's death has been moved in front of his shop on Broadway. He said he was in contact with the **Illinois Department of Transportation** and they asked him to remove it, so he did, so he cooperated and decided to place it in a permanent location at his shop.

Harp said the hardest part of this situation is a life has been lost and a family is broken because of apparent negligent behavior behind the wheel.

“The media has made everybody get in an uproar about a dentist killing a lion in **Zimbabwe**, but hundreds of people a year die to poor driving and nothing is said about it,” Harp said. “Our society has become all about speed and people want things quickly. As we progress as a society, more education needs to be implemented for more road users.”

