

Two pedestrians injured in Bend collisions; three in 24 hours

by Richard Burton

Two more pedestrians were injured when hit by vehicles in Bend on Tuesday, bringing the total to three pedestrian vs. auto collisions in the city in less than 24 hours. A Bend man was killed Monday when struck on S. Third Street near Powers Road.

The first of Tuesday's accidents happened about 2:40 p.m. January 9 at the intersection of NE Third Street and NE Greenwood Avenue when 18-year old Dustin Duffy was struck by a pickup making a right turn onto Third Street. Duffy suffered a broken leg and was transported to St. Charles Medical Center-Bend by ambulance, said Sgt. Dan Ritchie.

In the second accident, 12-year old Gunner Crawford was seriously injured about 5:20 p.m. when he attempted to cross the Bend Parkway at SE Truman Avenue. Crawford, along with two of his friends, was standing on the northwest corner of the intersection, said Sgt. Ron Taylor. Crawford tried to cross both southbound lanes of the parkway after he saw an uninvolved vehicle make a right turn onto Truman Avenue from the far-right lane of the parkway. He apparently didn't see the vehicle that struck him, a 2004 Ford Taurus driven by Kale A. Zahniser, 37, of Bend, which was traveling south on the parkway in the inside lane, said Sgt. Taylor.

Crawford's friends didn't try to cross at the same time, and were not injured. No charges against Zahniser are anticipated, said the sergeant, although the investigation is continuing.

Southbound traffic on the parkway was diverted to NW Colorado Avenue and SE Truman Avenue for about 20 minutes while emergency personnel and vehicles were in the roadway.

On Monday, Ben James Bjork, 48, was found lying in the middle of the street when officers responded to S. Third Street near Powers Road about 9:15 p.m., said Sgt. Tom Pine. Bend Fire paramedics transported Bjork to St. Charles Medical Center-Bend where he later died of his injuries. According to Sgt. Ritchie, it is likely that the victim's dark clothing and alcohol impairment were contributing factors in the incident.

Bend Police remind citizens to use caution when crossing streets, and to be cognizant that the responsibilities lie on both drivers and pedestrians when it comes to crossing streets.

By law, pedestrians are required to cross the roadway within a marked crosswalk or an unmarked crosswalk at an intersection. Pedestrians shall obey any traffic control device specifically applicable to the pedestrian. Also, pedestrians shall not suddenly leave a curb or place of safety and move into the path of a vehicle that is

so close to constitute a hazard.

Drivers are reminded to be alert for pedestrian traffic and to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.

Sgt. Ritchie also suggests that pedestrians walking at night should wear bright clothing, carry a flashlight and make themselves visible to traffic. Most often, he adds, pedestrians struck by vehicles at night are wearing dark clothing that blends in with the surroundings.

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