

California father, son jailed in fatal hit-and-run

by Cheryl McDermott

A father and son, both California residents, were arrested today in connection with the fatal hit and run collision in Bend early yesterday morning when a 41-year old Bend woman was struck and killed while riding a bicycle on Third Street near Powers Road. Police report the vehicle involved was later set afire and reported stolen to hinder the investigation.

Christopher George Goodson, the suspected driver (left), and his father George Harold Goodson (right) - DCJ photos

The remains of the Goodson's burned Mercedes were found on China Hat Road - BPD photo
Christopher George Goodson, 22, of El Cajon and his father, 51-year old George Harold Goodson of San Diego, were taken into custody and lodged in the Deschutes County Jail, Bend Police Captain Jim Porter said.

Christopher Goodson is believed to be the driver of a gray 2000 Mercedes Benz sedan that allegedly struck and killed Kimberly Ann Potter about 2:30 a.m., April 17. The suspect told police he was out looking for something to eat when the collision occurred.

His father, George Goodson, is accused of hindering prosecution by falsely reporting the automobile "later found torched on China Hat Road" stolen.

Bend Police and Oregon State Police conducted the initial investigation, Captain Porter said. Evidence from the scene indicated that Potter was riding northbound on SE Third Street when the vehicle, also traveling north, struck her from behind.

Witness statements and evidence at the scene suggested that the vehicle was probably a late model Mercedes that had sustained considerable damage from the impact, then continued down Third Street in the same direction. "The initial impact was substantial. It was a horrific scene," Porter said.

At about 9 a.m. George Goodson reported that his 2000 Mercedes was stolen from the parking lot of the motel where he was staying while visiting Bend -- the La Quinta Inn at 61200 S. Highway 97 -- and agreed to provide a statement to detectives at the Bend Police Department.

The captain said that about the same time that Goodson was reporting the car stolen, two other developments arose: detectives received a tip from a citizen who provided names of potential suspects and witnesses, and a burned Mercedes was located on China Hat Road.

Because of the complexity of the case due to the number of leads, suspects, and witnesses, the Central Oregon Major Incident Team was called upon to assist. Law enforcement officers from Bend, Redmond, and Prineville police departments, plus the Oregon State Police (OSP) Investigation division and the OSP crime lab participated in the growing investigation. The accident scene investigation closed Third Street to traffic for almost nine hours.

Four additional locations were put under surveillance when it was determined that they potentially held evidence of the crime: unit C-2 of the Summit Park Apartments at 2017 NE Full Moon Drive, 1701 NE Cackler, the father's room at the La Quinta Inn, and a location near milepost 2 on China Hat Road (where the burned Mercedes was found).

In mid-afternoon, police located a 17-year-old witness who was a passenger in the suspect vehicle at the time of the crash, Porter said. The witness provided information consistent with physical evidence found at the scene, and at China Hat Road.

Captain Porter said that detectives executed search warrants last night about 11:45 p.m. at the Full Moon, Cackler, and China Hat Road locations.

During the search of the apartment on Full Moon Drive, detectives found 22-year old Christopher Goodson who was hiding in the unit rented by his friend. They also seized a large quantity of cocaine and cash, a loaded firearm, and weight scales typically used in drug sales, Porter said.

At 1701 NE Cackler, evidence tying Christopher Goodson to the accident scene was found, and the burnt remains of the Mercedes was collected as evidence at the China Hat Road location.

The father, George Goodson, was arrested about 12:40 a.m. and is charged with hindering prosecution and first-degree attempted aggravated theft. The theft charges stem from witness statements suggesting the elder Goodson was conspiring to destroy the Mercedes to insure he would get an insurance settlement, Porter said, adding that the "aggravating" factor is because the value of the loss exceeds \$10,000.

The son, Christopher Goodson, was taken into custody at 7:20 a.m., and is charged with criminally negligent homicide; second-degree manslaughter, assault, and conspiracy to commit arson; reckless driving; and reckless endangering.

Captain Porter said the investigation is continuing, and asks that anyone who has information about the incident to contact the Bend Police Department at 541.322.2960.

California father, son jailed in fatal hit-and-run by Cheryl McDermott