



NEWS RELEASE
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Man Sentenced to 12 Years Prison in Drunk Driving Death of Nurse

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. – Greene County Prosecuting Attorney Dan Patterson announces that Matthew Charles Brannon, 32, of Springfield, MO was sentenced today for involuntary manslaughter in the first degree of Kathryn Wells. Wells, who was 55 at the time of her death, was a Springfield hospice nurse and former “Nurse of the Year.”

The Honorable Calvin Holden sentenced Brannon to 12 years in the Missouri Department of Corrections. Brannon must serve 85% of that sentence before becoming eligible for parole. This charge of involuntary manslaughter in the first degree is a class B felony, and carries a range of punishment of 5-15 years in prison. Brannon has one prior conviction for driving while intoxicated, as well as convictions for speeding.

Wells was killed on October 16, 2010 at the intersection of Mt. Vernon and Kansas Expressway in Springfield, when a vehicle driven by Brannon collided with a vehicle she was operating. Wells’ vehicle struck a light pole on the corner of Mt. Vernon and Kansas Expressway, and burst into flames. Wells died at the scene. Eyewitnesses and a crash reconstruction expert estimated that Brannon was driving between 72 and 92 miles per hour in a 45 mile per hour zone leading up to the crash. Following the collision, the defendant’s blood alcohol content was determined to be .159%. Brannon admitted that he had been consuming alcohol earlier in the day, and that he thought he could drive because he was “only a little buzzed.”

This case was being prosecuted by Assistant Prosecuting Attorney Emily Carlstrom. It was investigated by the Springfield Police Department and Detective James Hinkle was the lead investigator assigned to the case.

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