

Sheriff's Department makes arrest in fatal hit-and-run case

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 26 July 2019 02:55



McKinley County Sheriff Deputy Ivan Tsethlikai, Jr. was dispatched to milepost 9 on State Highway 371 after being alerted to a fatal hit-and-run incident early on July 11.

While on-site, Tsethlikai was notified by Metro Dispatch of a vehicle in a traffic stop by the Navajo Nation Police Crownpoint District around milepost 20 on State Highway 371. The vehicle that was stopped matched the description of the vehicle that fled the scene of the incident.

Tsethlikai met Sgt. Tommy Rogers and Ofc. Albert Calanity, both of Navajo Nation Police, at the site where the vehicle that fled was in a traffic stop. Calanity told Tsethlikai he had Zachary Taylor Dendy, 26, of Lubbock, Texas, in the back of his patrol unit.

Calanity said Dendy had told him and Rogers he had collided with an animal crossing the street. But after Dendy noted the front end of the blue 2010 Dodge Charger had sustained extensive damage in the collision, he fled the scene, according to Calanity.

The Charger was stopped near milepost 21, where Tsethlikai confirmed extensive front end damage.

Tsethlikai made contact with Dendy, who asked the officers what was going on. Tsethlikai told Dendy his vehicle matched the description of a vehicle involved in a fatal collision in Thoreau.

In a supplemental report by McKinley County Sgt. Elreno Henio, he stated he assisted with the

Sheriff's Department makes arrest in fatal hit-and-run case

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 26 July 2019 02:55

report of a vehicle collision with a pedestrian near the Speedway store in Thoreau.

Henio said Thoreau EMS and the volunteer fire department had secured the scene when he arrived, where he saw debris on the road and the victim lying on the road.

As Henio began to direct the deputies on the scene, Navajo Police Sgt. Julian Henry arrived. Henry stated he had arrived at the scene earlier and the vehicle that struck the victim fled northbound on State Highway 371.

Henio spoke with two witnesses on scene, one of whom said they were related to the victim. Both of them said they had seen the victim at the Speedway store, and the victim appeared to be intoxicated.

After leaving Speedway, the victim then proceeded to cross State Highway 371 when they both saw a vehicle come at high speed and strike the victim.

Both witnesses reported seeing the person later identified as Dendy exit the vehicle briefly before getting back inside it and fleeing north from the site.

Dendy was placed under arrest and seated in Tsethlikai's unit. Dendy then said his father had died and the memorial service was this weekend. He then said he thought he hit a deer before being stopped, and admitted he had fled the scene after he observed the damage to his vehicle.

After waiting for the vehicle to be towed, Tsethlikai took Dendy back to the site of the hit-and-run, where McKinley County Investigator Anthony Ashley read Dendy his Miranda Rights.

Tsethlikai transported Dendy to Rehoboth McKinley Christian Health Care Services for medical clearance and a blood draw requested by Ashley.

Sheriff's Department makes arrest in fatal hit-and-run case

Written by Staff Reports
Friday, 26 July 2019 02:55

Dendy received clearance from RMCHCS and was transported to McKinley County Adult Detention Center for booking on charges of leaving the scene of an accident knowingly, having no driver's license, and no proof of insurance.