

Man leaves scene of car accident after allegedly injuring two people

Written by Staff Reports

Friday, 17 February 2023 04:05



A man named Brandon Barbone has been charged with careless driving, great bodily harm by vehicle, and knowingly leaving the scene of an accident.

On Jan. 28 Gallup Police Officer Timothy Hughte was dispatched to the intersection of Highway 66 and Armand Ortega Boulevard in response to a vehicle that had reportedly hit a pole.

When he arrived at the scene, Hughte saw the vehicle pushed up against the southeast traffic light of the intersection.

He met with the two people who were still in the vehicle. According to Hughte's report, the man was wedged between the front passenger seat and the dashboard. The woman in the backseat had a large cut on her forehead.

Hughte was able to help the woman by stopping the bleeding from her forehead wound. But when he went around to the passenger's side door to help the man out of the vehicle, he saw that the door was locked and jammed. He had to break the window to get to the male victim, who was unconscious and had to be woken up.

When Hughte woke the man up, he noticed he also had a cut on his forehead. Medical staff had to forcefully remove the car's door to get to the man.

Before Hughte had responded to the call, Metro Dispatch had received a call about two men who had left the scene of the crash and had been dropped off at a Loves truck stop. Officers drove to the truck stop, picked up the two men, and drove back to the scene of the crash.

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Hughte met with Barbone, 29, from Church Rock, and according to his report the man seemed very distraught.

He said he had not been the one driving. According to Hughte's report, Barbone had blood on his nose, which was crooked. He also appeared to be "stupefied as he talked and stuttered."

Hughte noticed that Barbone had bloodshot, watery eyes, and he allegedly could smell the odor of alcohol coming off his breath. He was taken to the Gallup Indian Medical Center before Hughte could question him further.

After speaking to Barbone, Hughte talked to the other man who was found at the truck stop. He would only say that someone lost control of the vehicle. He wouldn't say where he had been inside the vehicle, and he refused to answer any more questions. He was transported to the Gallup Detox Center after it was determined that he wasn't injured in the crash.

Next, Hughte spoke to the people who had called in the accident – employees from the nearby Allsup's convenience store. They said they saw two men get out of the car after the accident and start walking westbound on Highway 66. They then got picked up by another vehicle, which headed westbound on Highway 66. One of the employees had video footage of the incident.

After speaking to the convenience store employees, Hughte headed to the Gallup Indian Medical Center to talk to the three people who were injured in the accident. According to his report, Hughte did not spend much time talking to the female victim whom he was having a hard time understanding.

The injured male was "very intoxicated and somewhat combative" and Hughte couldn't get a statement from him either.

Then Hughte went to speak to Barbone. He initially maintained that he wasn't the one driving, but when Hughte said there was cellphone footage of him behind the wheel of the vehicle,

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Barbone broke down crying.

He admitted to being the one driving. According to his report, Hughte noted that Barbone's eyes were bloodshot and glassy, and he could still smell the alcohol coming off his breath.

Due to his injuries Barbone was unable to do a Standard Field Sobriety Test, but he did consent to a blood test. However, Hughte couldn't get a blood test approved until 8 am the next day. The results were not included in Hughte's report.

After the blood test, Hughte spoke to the male victim again. He explained that they were coming from a party at the Motel 6 at 3306 W. Hwy. 66.

The man had suffered a concussion and he also had the cut on his head.

The woman broke several bones in her face and had multiple cuts on her head. She also suffered some possible inner brain bleeding and some spinal fractures. She had to be flown to another hospital for further treatment.

Barbone was arrested for the previously listed charges. His second detention and preliminary hearing is scheduled for Feb. 13.

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