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Person struck by fire truck

Brad Zinn
Staunton News Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

A Bridgewater fire truck was struck on Oct. 30 while responding to a crash on Interstate 81 in Rockingham County, resulting in one person being seriously injured, Virginia State Police said.

Shortly after midnight, state police initially responded to the 238 mile marker on I-81 in the northbound lanes after a tractor-trailer that had jackknifed was hit by a second rig, a press release said. Both vehicles came to rest in the median.

The driver of the second tractor-trailer was taken to an area hospital with minor injuries. The driver of the jackknifed tractor-trailer was charged with reckless driving.

Police said a Bridgewater Volunteer Fire Company fire truck responded to the crash with its emergency equipment activated. As the fire truck slowed, it was struck from behind by a 2018 Ford sedan. The driver of the sedan suffered serious injuries and was hospitalized, police said. A passenger was also injured. No injuries were reported on the fire truck.

The crashes remain under investigation.

Brad Zinn is the cops, courts and breaking news reporter at The News Leader. Have a news tip? Or something that needs investigating? You can email reporter Brad Zinn (he/him) at bzinn@newsleader.com. You can also follow him on X (formerly Twitter).

Tragedy to beauty



Abby Arey, holds a picture of her sister, MaDee Boxler, at a 15th anniversary celebration of the charitable organization The MaDee Project, which provides financial support and guidance to pediatric cancer patients and their families.
PROVIDED BY CHRIS LASSITER

The MaDee Project raises \$1M to support pediatric cancer patients

Monique Calello
Staunton News Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

Tamara Talley-Campbell knows her daughter MaDee Boxler would be proud.

The MaDee Project, an organization

named in her daughter’s honor, reached the 15-year milestone in October. The charitable organization provides financial support and guidance to pediatric cancer patients and their families in the Staunton, Augusta County and Waynesboro region of Virginia, as well as communities bordering those local-

ities.

In addition to the milestone anniversary, The MaDee Project also surpassed the \$1 million dollar mark in funds distributed to local families.

“I’m sad that it’s already been 15

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Augusta woman convicted of two financial felonies

Brad Zinn
Staunton News Leader
USA TODAY NETWORK

A Grottoes woman has been convicted on two felony charges in a case where prosecutors said she illegally acquired hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash from a longtime friend.

The victim, Mary S. Hatton, who later died, was suffering from cognitive decline when she gave power of attorney to her friend, 72-year-old Bonnie S. Williams, according to evidence. Williams took control of her finances, withdrew large amounts of cash, had Hatton’s

Grottoes home put in her own name and bought another residence in Rockingham County with Hatton’s money.

Following a four-day trial in Augusta County Circuit Court, on Oct. 24 a jury found Williams guilty on charges of financial exploitation of a mentally incapacitated adult and financial exploitation of a vulnerable adult.

Money missing, property changes hands

Following the death of her husband in a farming accident in 2019, Hatton, based on court records, inherited more

than \$2 million. But evidence showed she was experiencing a decline in her mental health and that her condition grew progressively worse in 2021 and 2022.

In 2021, Williams, who’d know Hatton for a number of years, moved into a home about a mile away from her on Payne Run Road in Grottoes. That same year, evidence showed that one of Hatton’s stepchildren was given power of attorney over her finances.

However, when Hatton, who had a habit of moving large sums of money from one bank account to another, agreed to a conservatorship and guard-

ianship appointment, she forgot about the discussion, according to Augusta County Deputy Commonwealth’s Attorney Alexandra Meador. When one of her stepchildren paid for the services, the payment overdrawed Hatton’s bank account after she’d once again shifted her funds. Meador said the mixup led Hatton to falsely believe somebody was trying to steal her money. Hatton then nixed her initial POA and in early 2022 she made Williams her power of attorney.

In 2022, there were several large

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