

## Public defender appointed in DUI drug case

**Bond remains at \$500,000 in fatal crash**

**The Register-Mail**

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GALESBURG —

A woman who told police she “blanked out” before the car she was driving struck a parked car that killed a woman Friday morning was appointed Public Defender Jim Harrell during a custody hearing Monday in Knox County Circuit Court.

Bond also will stand at \$500,000 for Lori A. Mahnesmith, 32, 334 S. Pearl St.

According to police reports, Mahnesmith, 34, 334 S. Pearl St., was driving a family member’s car to the store around 10:45 a.m. Friday. The vehicle left the roadway in the 200 block of Allens Avenue and struck a parked car in the driveway at 246 Allens Ave., killing Madge G. Gossage, 75, also known as Madge L. Stancomb, who was in the driver’s seat. Mahnesmith was apprehended a short time later after fleeing the area on foot.

Blood and urine tests revealed Mahnesmith had cannabis, cocaine, methamphetamine, benzodiazepines and opiates in her system.

Mahnesmith is charged with four felony offenses including aggravated driving under the influence of drugs, a Class 2 felony offense punishable by three to seven years in prison; driving under the influence of alcohol; driving under the influence of alcohol with a suspended license; and leaving the scene of a fatal accident, all Class 4 felony offenses punishable by one to three years in prison. If found guilty of aggravated DUI with drugs, Mahnesmith may be eligible for an extended prison sentence of seven to 14 years.

In addition to the felonies, Mahnesmith is charged with failure to reduce speed to avoid an accident, driving without insurance and driving with a suspended license.

Mahnesmith also has an outstanding \$5,000 warrant issued after she failed to appear in court April 30 for a previous DUI charge. Mahnesmith would need \$50,500 in cash to bond out of the Knox County jail where she is being held.

If she bonds out of jail, Mahnesmith was ordered not to consume alcohol or non-prescription drugs. Her first appearance with Harrell is 11 a.m. May 16.

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