

Driver charged in downtown Port hit and run

Written by BILL SCHANEN IV
Wednesday, 01 August 2012 17:16

Saukville man, 20, also accused of hiding drugs in car

A 20-year-old driver has been charged with hitting a pedestrian in downtown Port Washington, then speeding away from the scene of the accident.

Michael R. Frey of Saukville faces one felony count of hit and run causing injury in connection with the accident, which occurred at 1:30 a.m. Sunday, July 22, just hours after Port's Fish Day celebration ended.

That was the only crime Frey was charged with until police, who received an anonymous tip days later, discovered a secret compartment in his Honda Accord. In it, they found two types of prescription drugs — the narcotic pain reliever oxycodone and suboxone, which is used to treat drug dependencies, according to the criminal complaint charging Frey with one felony count of possession of narcotic drugs and one misdemeanor count of possession of a controlled substance.

Frey's trouble began when he hit a pedestrian near the 100 block of North Franklin Street, according to the criminal complaint filed in Ozaukee County Circuit Court.

Two police officers and a reserve officer were nearby at the time and witnesses said the pedestrian, who was not in a crosswalk, either walked or ran in front of Frey's car, Police Chief Kevin Hingiss said last week.

"It was not the driver's fault," Hingiss said. "The problem is he drove off after it happened."

Frey sped off, weaving through downtown and past squad cars before turning onto Lake Street. He was headed toward Upper Lake Park when officers stopped him, the complaint states.

Field sobriety tests indicated Frey, who said he didn't see the pedestrian until he hit him, was not drunk or otherwise impaired, according to the complaint.

Frey told police he fled the scene because he panicked, the complaint states.

The pedestrian, Christopher Morano, 22, of Port Washington, was taken by ambulance to Froedtert Hospital in Wauwatosa, police said.

After Frey was released from custody, he asked police and the Ozaukee County District Attorney's Office for permission to remove items from his car, which was impounded, the complaint states.

Randy Lanser of Lanser Garage and Towing in Belgium, which towed the car after the accident, also reported that Frey tried to access his car.

Police then received two tips that Frey hid drugs in a secret compartment under the shifter in

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his car. Police found 33 oxycodone tablets and suboxone films in the vehicle, according to the complaint.

Frey told police he wasn't a drug dealer but had a "problem" that he treated with suboxone, the complaint states.

Frey is free in lieu of \$500 bail, according to court records.