



CRIMINAL CHARGES ANNOUNCED IN GRINNELL'S MICHAEL WILLIAMS HOMICIDE INVESTIGATION

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GRINNELL, Iowa - On September 16, 2020, at approximately 5:30 p.m., Jasper County deputies and the Kellogg volunteer firefighters were dispatched to the 8100 block of N 67th Avenue E, near Mariposa County Park, on the report of a ditch fire. Responding emergency personnel found an active fire in the north ditch. The item burning was quickly identified as a human body. Emergency personnel took care to extinguish the flames while preserving evidence for further law enforcement processing.

At the request of the Jasper County Sheriff, the Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation dispatched agents and crime scene personnel to the area. Examination of the scene led investigators to believe the victim died as the result of a homicide.

Information provided by the public led law enforcement to expand the investigation to the City of Grinnell and a possible identification of the victim. The victim, 44-year-old Michael Williams of Grinnell, was identified through scientific methods by the Office the State Medical Examiner and the DCI Criminalistics Laboratory.

More than 50 law enforcement officers have been a part of this investigation to bring to account those responsible for the death of Michael Williams. As result, the DCI, the Grinnell Police Department and the Jasper County Sheriff's Office are announcing the arrest of four individuals for the participation before and after the death of Mr. Williams.

On the morning of September 22, law enforcement officers arrested:

Steven Vogel, 31, of Grinnell. Vogel has been charged with one count of murder in the first degree, a class A felony and Abuse of a Corpse (a Class D felony). Vogel is currently at the Marshall County Jail, where he was already in custody on unrelated charges.

Also arrested were 55-year old **Julia Cox**, 57-year-old **Roy Lee Garner**, and 29-year-old **Cody Johnson**, all of Grinnell. Cox and Garner have been charged with one count of Abuse of a Corpse (a class D felony), Destruction of Evidence (an aggravated misdemeanor), and Accessory After the Fact (aggravated misdemeanor). Johnson was charged with Abuse of a Corpse (a class D felony) and Accessory After the Fact (aggravated misdemeanor). All three are being held at the Poweshiek County jail.

The circumstances surrounding Mr. Williams's death and the limited facts revealed about the discovery of this crime have, understandably, caused concern within the Grinnell community and beyond. Evidence and statements gathered during this investigation have shown that Mr.

The investigation has revealed no evidence to show the acts against Michael Williams were motivated by his race nor that his death was the result of a hate crime.

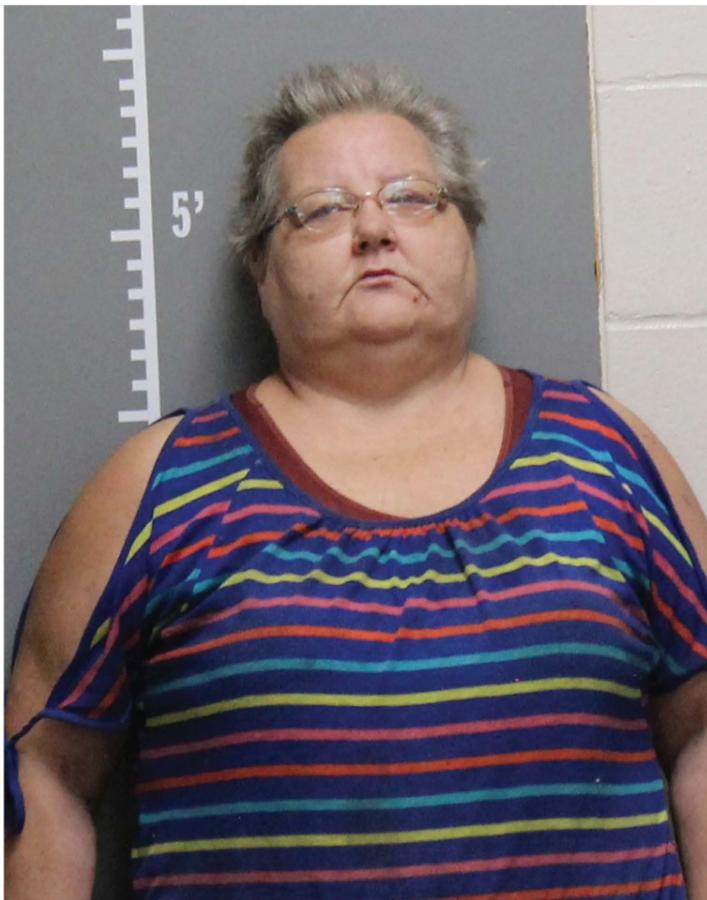
The investigation has revealed Mr. Williams was killed on or about September 12, in Grinnell. Mr. Williams' body was then wrapped in cloth and plastic, which was secured with rope and tape, then transported to rural Kellogg on September 16, where it was set ablaze.

On September 18, the Office of the State Medical Examiner classified Mr. Williams's manner of death as homicide and his cause of death as consistent with strangulation.

The investigation into Mr. Williams' death continues, and anyone with information is asked to contact the Grinnell Police Department at 641.623.5679 or the Division of Criminal Investigation at 515.725.6010.

Agencies participating in this investigation include the Jasper County Sheriff's Office, Poweshiek County Sheriff's Office, Tama County Sheriff's Office, Grinnell Police Department, Marshalltown Police Department, MINE Drug Task Force, Division of the State Fire Marshal, Iowa State Patrol, Jasper County Attorney's Office, Poweshiek County Attorney's Office, Office of the State Medical Examiner, Jasper County Conservation, Kellogg Volunteer Fire Department and Division of Criminal Investigation.

A criminal charge is merely an accusation and all defendants are presumed innocent until provide guilty.



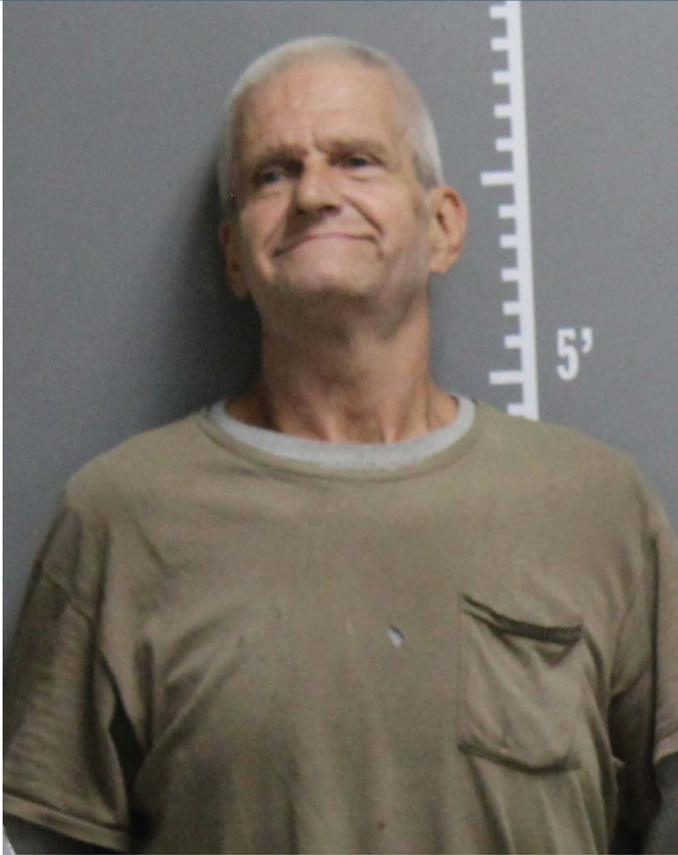
JULIA COX

[Julia Cox Complaint and Affidavit - Abuse of a Corpse](#)

[Julia Cox Complaint and Affidavit - Accessory After the Fact](#)

[Julia Cox - Complaint and Affidavit - Obstructing Prosecution Count 1](#)

[Julia Cox - Complaint and Affidavit - Obstructing Prosecution Count 2](#)



ROY LEE GARNER

[Roy Lee Garner Complaint and Affidavit - Abuse of a Corpse](#)

[Roy Lee Garner Complaint and Affidavit - Accessory After the Fact](#)

[Roy Lee Garner - Complaint and Affidavit - Obstructing Prosecution Count 1](#)

[Roy Lee Garner - Complaint and Affidavit - Obstructing Prosecution Count 2](#)



CODY JOHNSON

[Cody Johnson Complaint and Affidavit - Abuse of a Corpse](#)

[Cody Johnson Complaint and Affidavit - Accessory After the Fact](#)

**STEVEN VOGEL**

[Steven Vogel Complaint and Affidavit - Abuse of a Corpse](#)

[Steven Vogel Complaint and Affidavit - Murder 1](#)

ABOUT THE IOWA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

The Iowa Department of Public Safety (DPS) is the largest law enforcement agency in the state. It includes six divisions and several bureaus, all working together with local, state and federal government agencies and the private sector, to keep Iowa a safe place by following our core values: leadership, integrity, professionalism, courtesy, service and protection. Divisions within the Iowa DPS: Iowa Division of Criminal Investigation, Iowa Division of Narcotics Enforcement, Iowa State Patrol, Iowa State Fire Marshal Division, Iowa Division of Intelligence and Fusion Center, and Administrative Services Division. The Department of Public Safety is led by the Commissioner who is appointed by the Governor.

**Iowa Department of
Public Safety**

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