



City of Grinnell
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Police Department
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Dennis Reilly
Chief of Police

Media Release

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On August 18, 2019, at approximately 02:39 a.m., Grinnell emergency services responded to a motor vehicle accident on West Street South near Industrial Avenue. Initial reports indicated that the vehicle was on fire and that vehicle occupants may be trapped inside. Responding personnel located a single vehicle accident off of the roadway, with the vehicle fully engulfed in flames. The two vehicle occupants were out of the vehicle. The driver of the vehicle was identified as a Robert Gentil Marzette Jr, age 31 of Grinnell while the passenger was identified as a Kendell Kelly Gilliam, age 25 also of Grinnell. Mr. Marzette and Mr. Gilliam were treated at the scene by CARE Ambulance and transported to Unity Point Grinnell Regional Medical Center for non-life threatening injuries. Both parties have since been released. The car fire was extinguished by members of the Grinnell Fire Department but not before the vehicle sustained extensive fire damage, to include the passenger compartment.

The investigation has determined that Mr. Steve Briscoe, a passing motorist and a resident of Grinnell, observed a vehicle off the roadway and with the engine compartment on fire. Mr. Briscoe contacted 911 while stopping at the scene. Mr. Briscoe determined that there was a male standing to the rear of the vehicle (Mr. Gilliam) while the driver was still in the driver's seat. The driver was not responsive to Mr. Briscoe's verbal appeals to exit the vehicle. Fearing that the driver was in danger due to the fire expanding, Mr. Briscoe was able to solicit the assistance of Mr. Gilliam. The two men were able to pull Mr. Marzette out through the driver's door window and to safety. During the course of this rescue Mr. Briscoe sustained a minor wrist injury. Mr. Briscoe was also treated at Unity Point Grinnell Regional Medical Center and later released.

The cause of this accident remains under investigation. Anyone with information can contact Ofc. Greg Nelson or Sgt. Chris Wray at 641-236-2670. The Poweshiek County Sheriff's Office also provided assistance with this incident.

Police Sergeant Christopher Wray