

Hayride ends in tragedy

A hayride accident in White River Township Saturday night claimed the life of a 14-year-old Center Grove High School student.

Dead is Robert Eugene Herman Jr., 14, son of Robert and Joan Herman, 733 Tranquil Trail, Carefree North. Police said he fell beneath a wheel of a tractor pulling a wagon at the Mount Pleasant Cemetery on Morgantown Road.

Johnson county sheriff's deputies said Herman, a member of the Center Grove wrestling team, was one of a group of students attending a Fellowship of Christian Athletes outing at the farm of Robin Richards, 24, a math teacher and assistant football coach at the high school.

Following a wiener roast at the farm, deputies said, the students boarded two wagons for a hayride. Authorities said Richards, a sponsor of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes at Center Grove, drove the lead tractor.

Deputy Harvey Thompson said the accident occurred about 8:35 p.m., as the lead tractor and wagon was traveling south on the main road through the cemetery.

Witnesses told Johnson county coroner Richard E. Tudor that Herman jumped from the wagon to the ground, and was attempting to climb into the cab of the John Deere 40-20 tractor. "He was attempting to jump into the tractor and missed his step," Tudor said.

The youth fell to the ground and was struck by the right rear wheel of the tractor, which was moving at less than 3 miles per hour, authorities said.

The White River Township rescue unit and the Myers Ambulance Service was sent to the scene. Herman was taken to Johnson County Memorial Hospital, Tudor said, where he was pronounced dead of a basal skull fracture.

"He was trying to get up in the tractor with Richards," Tudor said. He reported

that witnesses stated that some students had been getting on and off both of the slow-moving wagons.

Tudor said the death, which marked the 15th traffic fatality in Johnson county this year, has been ruled accidental.

Services

Funeral services will be held at 1 p.m. Tuesday at the N.F. Chance Funeral Home in Indianapolis, with burial in the Greenwood Cemetery. Friends may call after 1 p.m. Monday at the funeral home.

Herman was born August 20, 1964 in Indianapolis. A freshman at Center Grove High School, he was a member of the school band and attended the Parkway Assembly of God Church.

In addition to his parents, he is survived by a sister, Nancy Jill Herman, at home; his maternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Osco Dinkins, Indianapolis; and his paternal grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Alton Tingle of Versailles.

Unsafe Hayride Kills again 14 year old The Daily Journal Franklin Indiana 13 November 1978

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