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NEWS

Mansfield teen dies 1 week after being injured in rollover crash



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A 15-year-old Mansfield girl died Saturday from injuries suffered in a Feb. 18 crash on Lexington-Ontario Road near Twitchell Road, her father, retired Springfield Township Fire Chief Matthew Carey, said Tuesday.

She gave the gift of life through organ donation during a surgery Saturday at Columbus Nationwide Children's Hospital, her father said.

Abigail Carey was home-schooled, she loved animals and loved to bake, her father said. She often accompanied her brother, who had coon dogs, hunting.

The one-vehicle crash occurred at 11:35 a.m. in Springfield Township.

Abigail was a passenger in a Jeep Wrangler driven by her brother, Ryan Wagner, 16, of Mansfield, her father said.

The Ohio Highway Patrol reported that the Jeep was traveling northwest on Lexington-Ontario Road when it went off the right side of the road, struck a ditch and a culvert, overturned and struck a pole, ejecting Carey. Her father said she was not wearing a seatbelt.

Wagner, who was wearing his seatbelt, suffered injuries, the patrol said.

Abigail was transferred to OhioHealth Mansfield Hospital and later transported to a Columbus hospital, according to Sgt. Ryan Purpura, a spokesman for the Ohio Highway Patrol.

Abbie had planned to go with her father to a gun show at the Richland County Fairgrounds on the day of the crash but instead decided to go fishing. She and her brother had just come from Clear Fork Reservoir where they had been fishing, her father said.

Abigail's father stresses importance of wearing a seatbelt

Matthew Carey said he is hoping to start a foundation and plans to talk to youths about the importance of wearing seatbelts. Her brother was wearing his seatbelt, he said.

Her father said Abigail had completed a hunter safety course online and was very serious about hunting, having shot her first deer recently.

"Ryan renamed his dog, Echo, to Abbie's Echo, filling out all the paperwork himself to officially change the dog's name," Matthew Carey said. "She and her brother were super close.

"Abbie was our compassionate one," he said Tuesday, saying he was preparing to write her obituary. "We laughed and said she would be the one to care of us when we were older."

Abigail was a good candidate for organ donation, her father said

Her parents chose to help others through the horrible tragedy by donating Abigail's organs. Her father said it was important to him and the family to donate her organs.

"She was able to help five different families because she was a candidate to help several people," her father said. He last saw her on Feb. 25 when she went into surgery at Columbus Nationwide Children's Hospital.

Matthew Carey said his daughter suffered an injury to her spine, but had no other broken bones.

"Her side of the car was not badly damaged," he said.

She went into cardiac arrest when firefighters arrived at the crash, having been pinned beneath the vehicle. She went into cardiac arrest again at OhioHealth Mansfield Hospital, her father said.

Medical professionals in Columbus fought to keep her brain from swelling but it was not possible, Matthew Carey said.

He said Abbie often came to the Springfield Township Fire Station where he had worked and he wished to thank everyone for their support during this tragic time.

"The firefighters all knew her and this has been hard on them too," he said of the first responders from Springfield Township who responded to the crash.

A celebration of life will be held on March 11. The celebration will be held at Handlebar Ranch at 6695 County Road 76, Mount Gilead. The celebration will take place from 2-6 pm. A remembrance ceremony will be held starting at 2:35 p.m. During this celebration, her family said they will take that time to talk as a group and share about Abigail. The family would like everyone in remembrance of Abigail to take the time to have faith in the Lord and Savior, consider organ donation and promise to wear a seat belt.

Memorial contributions, if so desired, may be made to Snyder Funeral Homes to assist the family with funeral expenses.

The crash remains under investigation, the patrol said.

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