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Ozark woman faces murder charge in fatal crash

By Matt Elofson

Ozark police have arrested a woman on a murder charge for her involvement in a fatal traffic crash that left a 78-year-old woman dead.

According to a statement from the Ozark Police Department, police arrested Ashley Dean Simmons, 25, and charged her for the death of Ernestine Barfield Pipkin, of Ozark.

The statement said the charge stemmed from a traffic crash that happened Friday around 9:55 p.m. on South Union Avenue. The investigation revealed the 2001 Chevrolet Cavalier driven by Simmons was traveling south on Union Avenue when the vehicle crossed into the opposing lane of travel striking a 2000 Honda Accord driven by Pipkin.

The statement said Pipkin was taken to a hospital in Dothan after the crash for treatment to her injuries. Ozark police were notified Pipkin died around 6:30 p.m. Saturday from the injuries she suffered in the crash.

Police arrested Simmons after the crash, and charged her with driving under the influence of a controlled substance. That charge was later upgraded to murder.

Simmons was not injured. Both drivers were wearing seatbelts.

The statement said Simmons was being held in the Dale County Jail without bond on the manslaughter charge. The crash remains under investigation by Ozark police.

If convicted of the class A felony crime of murder, Simmons faces 10 to 99 years or life in prison.

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