

EXCLUSIVE: Fatal Hit And Run Occurred Near Residence Of Chronic Multiple Drunk Driver
By Mark Belling, WISN-AM

I have learned that a fatal hit and run crash last Friday night in northern Racine County occurred just down the road from the residence of a man free on bail after being arrested for OWI-seven plus offenses.

The victim in the case, 61-year old Keith Brown, was walking along 76th Street, also known as County Highway U, between Seven Mile Road and the Milwaukee-Racine County line this past Friday night. His truck was stuck and he was apparently walking back to a tavern. He was struck and killed by a hit and run driver around 8:20 pm. The area there is unlit. The driver fled the scene and Racine County authorities are investigating but have made no arrests. Brown was a car mechanic and former crew chief for local stock car legend Al Schill.

This morning, December 4, a man who lives on 76th a very short distance from the fatal accident site, pleaded guilty to OWI, 7+ offenses for an incident that occurred in January. The man, Keith Baumann, was free until this morning on a cash bond set by Racine County Judge Mark Nielsen. The bond was revoked and Baumann was taken into custody at his plea hearing today. He won't be sentenced until April of next year but will apparently remain in custody in the interim. After Baumann's arrest in January, he was held in the Racine County Jail with cash bond set at \$15,000. The bail was lowered in the summer by Judge Nielsen to a mere \$1000 cash and, according to court records, Baumann was freed July 31.

The lowering of the bond amount by Nielsen allowed a chronic drunk driver facing a certain long prison term to be freed in the interim. During that interim, another man was killed in a hit and run crash not far from the driveway of Baumann's residence. The fatal crash occurred only four days before Baumann was taken back into custody after his guilty plea.

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December 3, 2018