

11-year-old driver in fatal accident

■ Stolen pickup struck station wagon Thursday

BOBBYJOIN

News Editor

KIRKMAN -- It was an 11-year-old girl who was driving a stolen pickup truck last Thursday morning that struck a station wagon south of here, killing the car's driver, officials said this week.

Joyce Elder, 57, Irwin, died as a result of injuries sustained in the accident, which occurred at about 8 a.m. at the intersection of County Road M36 and 1400th St.

The 11-year-old, who has yet to be identified, sustained a broken nose, lacerations and a possible knee injury, officials said.

Both were taken to Myrme Memorial Hospital, Harlan, after the accident by Medivac Ambulance/Rescue. Elder was pronounced dead, while the girl was to be held overnight for observation.

According to authorities, the 11-year-old had apparently driven a friend to Harlan that morning in a stolen pickup and was on her way back to Kirkman. The two youngsters were said to be on their way to Texas to see the 11-year-old's father, who apparently is in a Texas prison.

The 1989 Ford pick-up which she was driving, belonging to neighbor William Uren, Kirkman, had been reported stolen at 7:25 a.m. that morning,

officials said.

Authorities said the pickup was eastbound on 1400th St. when the 11-year-old apparently lost control of the vehicle. The truck went off the roadway, came back on and then across the road, striking the 1985 Ford station wagon driven by Elder, officials said.

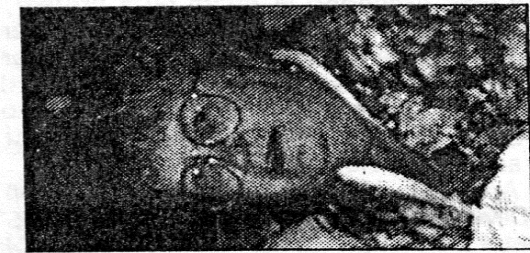
Medivac Ambulance/Rescue was called to the scene as well as the Kirkman Fire Department and sheriff's office. Both vehicles were listed as total losses.

The 11-year-old has not been charged in the incident to date, although charges were expected to be filed Monday via juvenile court. The youth's name becomes a matter of public record once a delinquency petition is filed in court.

The 11-year-old's friend also could be charged in the incident. Her name has not been released.

Services...

Services for Elder were held Saturday, Aug. 3 at 2 p.m. at Burnmeister Funeral Home, Harlan, with burial of ashes at a later date.



Joyce Elder
...services were held Saturday

Elder is survived by her husband, James M. Elder, of Irwin; three sons -- Phillip (Theresa) Elder of Sergeant Bluff, Kevin (Cathy Ferguson) Elder of Irwin and James Anthony "Chip" Elder of Mitchell, S.D.; one sister, Mary Lee Donlan, of

Burlington; one brother, Robert Vandersnick, Jr. of Mt. Pleasant; her mother, Edna Vandersnick, of Mt. Pleasant; and four grandchildren -- Laurel and Sarah Ferguson, and Michael and Katie Elder.

Elder had been a secretary at St. Luke's Gordon Recovery Center in Harlan, formerly MIADAC, for 23 years.

Friends and family of Elder described her as "a happy lady" who always had a smile and took care of everyone. She was the wife and mother everyone wanted to have, they said.