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Updated on February 5, 2005

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Local News

Boca lawyer charged with DUI

Wheeler could face disciplinary action if convicted of charge stemming from car accident

Published Saturday, February 5, 2005 at 1:00 am
by [By Dale M. King](#)

A Boca Raton attorney charged with driving under the influence with injury could face disciplinary action if convicted, according to the Florida Bar Association.

Delray Beach Police said Christopher Wheeler, 58, an attorney with the Boca Raton law firm of Proskauer Rose LLP, faces a DUI with injury charge stemming from an accident on Congress Avenue in that city the night of Dec. 15.

"The Fort Lauderdale office of the Bar Association is aware of the accident," said Eric Turner, chief branch disciplinary counsel for that office. The charge, Turner said, is a misdemeanor. The Bar Association will not step in, he said, unless Wheeler is convicted.

If that happens, the matter will be reviewed and turned over to a grievance committee to determine if Wheeler should be prosecuted. If so, a complaint will be filed with the Supreme Court, Turner said.

The police report said Wheeler's car struck another vehicle from behind, causing the other car to roll into a "ditch-type terrain off the shoulder of the roadway." The other driver, Prospere Mede, 54, of Boynton Beach, was trapped in the car and had to be removed by paramedics, police said.

Both Mede and Wheeler were taken to Delray Medical Center for treatment of injuries.

Documents obtained from Delray Police said Wheeler's blood alcohol level was about .2 that night. In Florida, a blood level of .08 or higher can result in a drunken driving charge.

According to reports, Wheeler and his wife, Deanna, had been attending a party. She was driving behind her husband on their way home. Police said Wheeler's car took off "at a high rate of speed" from the traffic light at 1000 S. Congress Ave. "and struck the vehicle ahead of him." Officers who responded said they smelled "an odor of alcoholic beverage" in the car, and said Wheeler's speech was "very slurred."

The report said he willingly submitted to blood alcohol testing. Wheeler is a prominent attorney in Boca Raton. He works in the corporate department and is a partner in the Florida office of Proskauer Rose LLP. The firm's Web site says he is versed in real estate and corporate law, institutional lending, administrative law and industrial revenue bond financing. He is also active in professional, charitable and philanthropic organizations.

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He is on the board of trustees of the Boca Raton Community Hospital and the hospital foundation, serves on the executive committee and board of directors of the Florida Atlantic University Foundation and is on the Board of the National Conference for Community and Justice of South Florida.

Both FAU and the hospital declined comment on the charge against Wheeler. Hospital spokeswoman Jamie Oberweger said BRCH does not comment on the personal matters of its board members.

FAU spokeswoman Kristine McGrath said the university declined comment because the matter "does not affect the mission of the university."

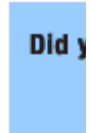
Mike Edmondson, spokesman for State Attorney Barry Krischer, said his boss's office normally doesn't get involved with traffic cases. Edmondson said Wheeler will not receive special treatment because he is a lawyer.

The victim in the crash could not be reached for comment. However, his wife said he is out of the hospital and has returned to work.

Dale M. King can be reached at dking@bocanews.com.

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Boca Raton lawyer faces DUI charges

Sun-Sentinel
Posted February 3 2005

Drunken driving charges were filed Monday against a prominent Boca Raton attorney and member of the Florida Atlantic University Foundation's board of directors, according to a Delray Beach police report.

Christopher C. Wheeler, 58, was on his way home from Boca Raton Community Hospital's Christmas ball on Dec. 15th when he rear-ended a car in the 1000 block of Congress Avenue, the report said. The crash trapped the other driver inside his car.

[AD]



When officers arrived, Wheeler, who also is a hospital board member, smelled


of alcohol and spoke with slurred speech, the report said. According to toxicology results, his blood-alcohol level was above .2. Driving is illegal at .08 and higher.

Wheeler was charged with driving under the influence with injury.

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