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The Gazette (Cedar Rapids-Iowa City)

Woman killed in Missouri had left Iowa with friends

Gazette staff report

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IOWA CITY - Laura Van Wyhe left Bonaparte on Friday night in the company of acquaintances from Kahoka, Mo., a Missouri state trooper said last night. Approximately two hours later, at 1:50 a.m. Saturday, the 21-year-old Iowa City woman was found critically injured along Highway 136 near Kahoka in northeast Missouri and died about three hours later in an Illinois hospital.

Missouri State Trooper Bruce Clemonds said Van Wyhe's injuries were consistent with trauma inflicted when a person is struck by a vehicle.

"Was it a complete accident? Hit-and-run? Was she struck intentionally? We don't know at this stage," Clemonds said.

He said Van Wyhe, an Iowa City child care provider, had visited family friends in Bonaparte and left there with other friends from Kahoka. She was not driving, he said.

He declined to reveal the names of the Kahoka people or to say how many were in the car. When the injured Van Wyhe was found, the car was not in the vicinity, Clemonds said.

Earlier, investigators said Van Wyhe probably was not injured at the spot where she was found.

Clemonds said the Kahoka residents had been interviewed but were not considered suspects at this time.

He said investigators still had a long list of people to interview.

Clemonds also said he could not say why Van Wyhe left the car in which she had been riding. "That's part of the criminal investigation," he said.