Elderly couple found in sad, peaceful scene

Daughter says she expected end one in Marion field

Cindy Pieper never put much stock in the theory that her elderly parents had picked up a crazed hitchhiker in Marion.

Daughter says she expected the end in sad, peaceful scene.

Mike Vance, out to let his dog run in Willowood, was headed to his nearby house with his 3-year-old daughter when a car, about two miles from his house, caught his eye.

He said he considered it a homicide.

"To me, he kind of had a smile on his face. They looked like they fell asleep and went to a better place."

After he knew it hit the tree, he knew for sure it was a homicide.

"It looked out of the ordinary to see a car in a field at the end of the day," said Vance.

As he set out, Vance could see a car down the road that had been involved in an accident earlier that day.

"If looking for a car involved in an accident, it looked like it was already perished," he said.

As Vance walked, he could see the tree that the car had hit and had come to rest against it.

"That's how I imagined it will always have the first, best picture of the Smiths' death," he said.

Patrol said. "At the very least, it's a manslaughter case."