



LAKE COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

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SHERIFF / CORONER

BEN WOODS
UNDERSHERIFF

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***** PRESS RELEASE *****

January 10, 2019

On January 8, 2019, at about 1312 hours, Lake County 911 took a report of a motor vehicle which had crashed into the back of Murdoch's in Polson. Polson PD and EMS responded and attempted life saving measures on the unresponsive driver of the vehicle. A passenger was also injured. The driver, identified as 76 year old, Mervin Payne, of Polson, died at the scene. The passenger, 57 year old, Crystal Anderson, of Polson, was transported to a local hospital where she died a short time later.

Lake County Sheriff's Office Coroners conducted an investigation in consultation with Montana Highway Patrol and the State Medical Examiner, and determined that Payne suffered a cardiac event, which likely caused him to drive from the southbound lanes of Hwy 93, across the northbound lanes, through a field, over an embankment, and then ultimately into the back of the Murdoch's store causing damage to the building. Neither Payne, nor Anderson suffered injuries from the crash which would have caused their death. Payne died of natural causes, and Anderson died from a cardiac event subsequent to the motor vehicle accident.

The Lake County Sheriff's Office would like to thank the staff at Murdoch's of Polson for caring for a dog who was involved in the crash, while responders tended to the victims and the scene and Lifesaver's animal rescue, who are facilitating care and transportation of the dog to the owner's next of kin, who live out of state.

We also wish to extend our condolences to the Payne and Anderson families.

Don Bell

Sheriff