

Robert C. LaFollette

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Thorntown man killed in accident

By Maria J. Flora

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SHANNONDALE - Robert C. LaFollette, 77, Thorntown, died Tuesday after a semi tractor trailer hit the farm tractor he was driving within a mile of his house.

LaFollette was a two-term Western Boone School Board member and operated LaFollette Farms, Seeds and Chemicals. At one time he also operated LaFollette Trucking. He was married to Martha E. LaFollette.

Boone County Sheriff's Department Chief Deputy Jeff Keller said LaFollette, 10787 W. Indiana 32, was struck while turning into his farm lane about 5 p.m.

The semi and a van followed LaFollette going westbound for some time before the van passed LaFollette east of Shannondale, Keller said. The semi then pulled into the eastbound lane to pass LaFollette on the left.

At that time, LaFollette turned left, into the semi's path, Boone County Deputy Sean Kutz said.

A Methodist Hospital LifeLine crew pronounced LaFollette dead at the scene. He suffered several lacerations and blunt force trauma to his head, Kutz said.

Semi driver Patrick D. Simpson, 47, Pontiac, Ill., was uninjured.

Boone County Sheriff's accident reconstructionists are investigating, Keller said, adding it is unknown how fast the semi was traveling.

"It's a shame for sure," Keller said. "Indiana 32 is a main thoroughfare between I-65 and I-74 and a lot of semis drive there." Police do not believe alcohol was a factor.

LaFollette's obituary is on page 2A.

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