Drunk driving suspected cause of early morning crash

Friday, August 12, 2011
The drivers of two 18-wheelers were hospitalized this morning after their rigs were hit by a drunk driver, said Caddo Sheriff Steve Prator.

Around 4 a.m., Henry Barrett II, 25, of Scott, LA, was traveling northbound on Hwy. 1 in Caspiana when he crossed the center line in his Ford F-250 and traveled onto the southbound shoulder, according to Cpl. Sean McCullough. He then veered back into the southbound lane where he struck the trailer of an 18-wheeler driven by Jimmy Foster, 42, of Keithville. The trailer was damaged and its rear tires were blown out.

Barrett continued on and hit a second 18-wheeler, which was also southbound. The crash ruptured the rig's fuel tank, causing it to catch fire and burn to the ground. The driver of the rig, Vernon Bell, 38, of Bossier City, was able to get out of the cab but was taken to Willis-Knighton Pierremont for treatment of moderate injuries. Foster was also taken to Willis-Knighton Pierremont. Both men were later released. Barrett was not injured but was arrested for DWI, by Sgt. James Houston.

Traffic on Hwy. 1 between Hwy. 175 and Ellerbe Road was closed until around 10 a.m. this morning while sheriff's patrol deputies worked the accident. Both 18-wheelers belonged to Illini State Trucking and were hauling sand, which did not spill onto the roadway.