

## VIRGINIA: Pastor seeking release, medical help after 2 wrecks

Written by Bill McKelway, Richmond Times-Dispatch  
Thursday, 05 April 2012 00:00

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RICHMOND, Va. -- A pastor at Varina Baptist Church was planning Wednesday to seek additional medical help after being arrested a day earlier on charges of driving under the influence of drugs and reckless driving, a family member said.

Jay James Bertrand, 47, was arranging details of his release Tuesday night from jail after an overnight stay following two crashes that day. One wreck damaged a Krispy Kreme doughnut store, and another occurred hours later in a different vehicle near Patterson Avenue and Gaskins Road.

Bertrand, according to his brother-in-law Brandon Pickett, was taking medication for severe back spasms but suffered successive, nearly paralyzing attacks Tuesday, leading to the wrecks. "He lost control of the cars," Pickett said.

Henrico County police said Bertrand crossed several lanes of traffic Tuesday morning in his minivan before running into the Krispy Kreme at West Broad Street and Staples Mill Road. The wreck broke out windows and slightly injured some workers preparing the store for a grand reopening scheduled for Wednesday. Only the drive-thru window remained operable.

Bertrand was taken to a hospital after the Krispy Kreme wreck but said he did not need treatment and left with a doctor's approval, Pickett said.

Hours later, Bertrand struck a car from the rear on Patterson Avenue after it passed him when he failed to proceed on a green light, according to police. Pickett said both incidents occurred

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when Bertrand's back froze up and he lost control of the minivan and then a passenger car, which he also owns.

On Wednesday morning, appearing on a video arraignment in Henrico General District Court, Bertrand began voluntarily acknowledging what had happened before Judge Mary B. Malveaux advised him that he had a right to remain silent and that a prosecutor was observing the video arraignment in the courtroom.

When Malveaux asked Bertrand if he is employed, Bertrand sheepishly said that he probably no longer had a job because of the incidents Tuesday.

But Pickett stressed Wednesday night that church members and the church leadership are highly supportive of Bertrand and are praying for his recovery as well as any other people affected by the crashes.

"Here's a man who has devoted his life to helping others, and now he's needing help himself. He's not used to that," Pickett said.

Pickett said that Bertrand expects to be released soon on bond and would get checked out at a hospital and by his doctor. Malveaux ordered that Bertrand receive a bracelet that can detect the use of alcohol or drugs.

Bertrand is scheduled to be back in court April 18 to inform the court that he has hired a lawyer. His bond was set at \$2,500.

[bmckelway@timesdispatch.com](mailto:bmckelway@timesdispatch.com) (804) 649-6601

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