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Firefighter killed in Sunday wreck identified

By MARK DAVIS The Kansas City Star

The Kansas City firefighter killed in a traffic accident Sunday was Gerald K. McGowan, 57, who was acting fire captain on a pumper truck that collided with two cars and crashed into a tree.

McGowan had been with the department 32 years and had plans to retire before the end of this year, according to fire department officials.

Firefighter John H. Parison, 29, was one of three other firefighters injured in the accident. He was in stable condition this morning at the University of Kansas Hospital, the department said.

Two other firefighters on the truck were treated and released from St. Joseph Health Center. They were Fire Apparatus Operator Stanley Williams, 47, and Firefighter Leroie D. Workcuff, 30.

Police said the accident occurred about 5:15 p.m. Sunday as the pumper was en route to an apartment fire at 9828 Willow Ave. The fire had been a minor one.

Pumper 33 was heading south on Blue Ridge Boulevard and tried to swerve around a car that had slowed to make a left-hand turn into a driveway. The vehicles collided and the fire truck also hit a northbound car that had stopped on the far right side of the street.

The pumper, unable to stop, sheared off a utility pole and crashed into a tree.

Police have said the fire truck's driver was not at fault.