

Two I.V. High students die in crash; three other young persons injured

Two young women, one of them an 18-year-old June 5 graduate of Illinois Valley High School and another a 16-year-old junior student at the school, were pronounced dead at the scene of a vehicle rollover on Takilma Road on Monday, June 11, said Josephine County Sheriff's Office (JCSO).

Investigators believe that the two who died were ejected from the vehicle, which resulted in their deaths.

Additionally, three other young persons were injured, two of them students at IVHS. The other injured party was identified as Shyan Christine Ellis, 16, who was said to be staying with Savannah Pauline Bassett, 18, who graduated June 5, and is one of those who died.

The other fatality was identified as Kiara Alexi Faith Richardson, 16.

Besides Shyan Ellis, those injured were identified as Ariel Ann Sinnwell, 18, also a June 5 IVHS graduate; and Lonnie Michael Behn, 16, a sophomore. He was the driver of a four-door 2002 Isuzu Rodeo, reported JCSO.

Investigators, including an Oregon State Police accident reconstruction team, "do not believe at this time that

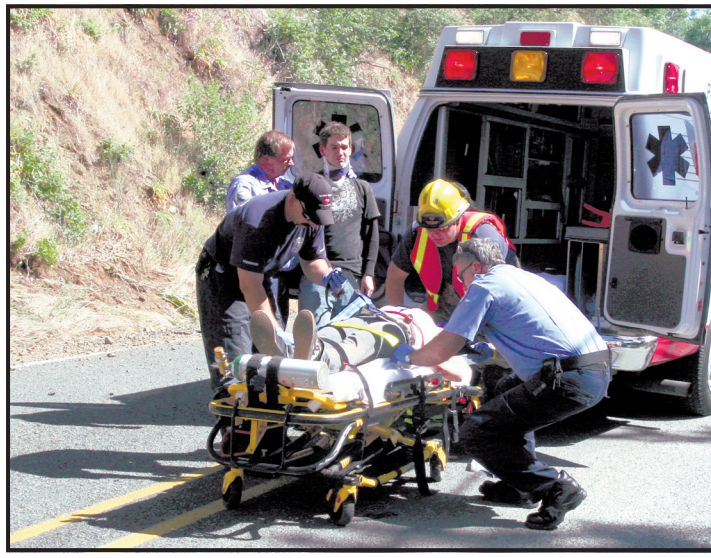


(Photos by 'I.V. News')

drugs or alcoholic beverages were factors in the crash." Officers are attempting to verify which of those in the vehicle were wearing safety belts, said JCSO.

Investigators are asking that anyone with information "about this tragic event" phone Det. Sgt. Ken Selig at 474-5152; or the JCSO Major Crime Unit confidential tip line at 474-5160.

Because of the deaths of the two from IVHS, grief counselors and community



pastors were at the school Tuesday, June 12. Students were allowed to leave their final exams, if they so chose, to seek comfort.

A similar situation existed at Lorna Byrne Middle School and Evergreen Elementary School. Kiara Richardson, sources said, had sisters at both schools, which resulted in fellow students being affected by grief.

It was not immediately known if memorial or funeral services would be held soon for the two who died.

The three injured persons were treated at Three Rivers Community Hospital in Grants Pass. American Medical Response (AMR) used two ambulances to transport the injured from the scene in the 6800 block of Takilma Road. It was not immediately known how soon after treatment the three were released from the hospital.

Besides AMR, JCSO and OSP, Illinois Valley Fire District (IVFD) responded with several crews to assist at the scene. Personnel were at the location until close to 9 p.m. following the wreck, reported at 3:48 p.m.

JCSO said preliminary indications are that Lonnie Behn had picked up his four

passengers at IVHS and was southbound on Takilma Road traveling to an address on Waldo Road.

JCSO added that he "lost control of his vehicle when he left the roadway. Behn's vehicle came back onto the paved road, slid across the opposite lane and rolled."

IVFD said it appeared that the vehicle had struck an embankment and rolled more than once. The three injured persons were up and walking about when emergency responders arrived, IVFD said.

The crash scene is a short distance past a curve approximately 2 miles north of Four Corners, which is the intersection of Takilma and Waldo roads, where Happy Camp Road begins.

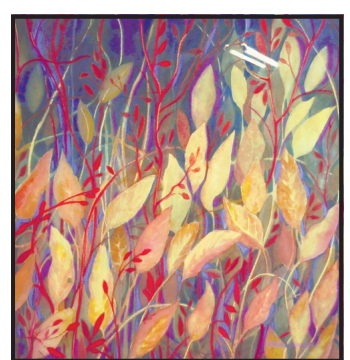
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SECOND FRIDAY ART WALK on June 8 attracted many spectators to Downtown Cave Junction. (Clockwise from top left) Sculpture by Scott Carey at Changes Art Gallery; Pearlene Gavlik with her jewelry at Special Productions; a detail from a Debbie Dawson painting at Upstairs Art Gallery above the state liquor store; a detail of a poster by Miranda Stiles at the county building; photographs by Sue Lily at Changes

focusing on the nuts and bolts of bridge construction; Linda Naydol with her botanical illustrations at Jefferson State Financial Group; an example of button work by Miguelo Kime; sculpture by Illinois Valley High School students at Pizza Pit; and at an Artists Way, Lorna Byrne Middle School student woodworking art with (from left) Roger Hults, Winona Gallegos, Bryan Biggs and Kara Tyler. (Photos by 'I.V. News')

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