

Three injured in Hwy. 26 drunk-driving crash

by Cheryl McDermott

A 48-year old Portland man was arrested Wednesday and charged with drunk-driving and other crimes in connection with a near head-on crash one mile west of Government Camp on Highway 26 that sent three people to the hospital, police reported.

Gregory Arnason (inset) was charged with DUII when his vehicle crashed nearly head-on into this van. Arnason was not injured, but all three men in the van were taken to the hospital. OSP photos. The 2008 Nissan Armada SUV driven by Gregory Allen Arnason, 48, of southwest Portland, crossed the centerline about 2:15 p.m. and crashed into a van occupied by three people, Oregon State Police (OSP) troopers said. Arnason, uninjured, was taken into custody and is charged with driving under the influence of intoxicants, reckless driving, and three counts of fourth-degree assault.

The driver of the 1990 Volkswagon Vangon was identified as Benjamin Dobler, 33, of northeast Portland. Troopers said Dobler tried to avoid the Nissan by steering to the left, but his vehicle was struck in the right-front corner. Dobler and his passengers Matthew Butler, 22, and Sean Reynolds, 35, both of Portland, were transported by ambulance to Mt. Hood Medical Center in Gresham for treatment of what OSP described as non-life threatening injuries.

Butler, the right-front passenger in the van, apparently saw the Nissan approaching and unbuckled his seat belt, jumping into the rear of the van just before impact.

Witnesses reported seeing Arnason driving erratically on Timberline Road prior to the crash.

Highway 26 was closed for over an hour, OSP reported.