

Two injured in Highway 126 head-on crash

by Cheryl McDermott

A Prineville husband and wife were injured Saturday afternoon when their car drifted across the centerline and hit an oncoming pickup head-on, deputies reported.

Crook County Sheriff's deputies, Prineville Police officers and Fire & Rescue personnel responded to milepost 14 on Highway 126 about 5:45 p.m., March 1, Sgt. Jim Chapman and Deputy Dave Dethman stated in a news release.

Upon arrival, they found the injured couple's car, a 2001 Toyota 4-door, about 50-feet off the highway with severe front-end damage. The pickup had rolled three times before it came to rest on its wheels, also 50-feet off the road, Chapman and Dethman said.

Witnesses reported that Billy Wells, 71, was westbound on the four-lane portion of the highway, headed toward Redmond, when his Toyota drifted over the centerline and "just missed" other vehicles before it crashed into the left rear quarter-panel of a 1995 Ford pickup driven by 52-year old Jackie Hamilton of Prineville.

Billy Wells was taken by helicopter to St. Charles Medical Center in Bend, and his wife, Neta, was transported by ground ambulance to Pioneer Memorial Hospital in Prineville, the deputies said. The extent of their injuries are unknown.

Hamilton was uninjured.

The investigation is continuing, Sgt. Chapman said.

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