

Driver dies, two injured in Rock Creek crash

by Bend_Weekly_News_Sources

ROCK CREEK, Ore. — Despite valiant efforts by a deputy who risked his life to free a driver trapped underwater in his SUV early Saturday morning, the Beaverton man was pronounced deceased at the scene of the single-vehicle crash to which alcohol may have contributed. Two of the three passengers in the vehicle were injured.

Washington County Sheriff's Office Deputy Dan Nuehle risked his life to save the driver, who was trapped in his vehicle and was pronounced dead at the scene — WCSO photo

According to the Washington County Sheriff's Office, a 1989 Jeep Cherokee driven by Chad Saviers, 26, was traveling west on West Union Road about ¼ mile west of NW 185th Avenue in the area of the unincorporated Rock Creek community just after 2:30 a.m., April 18 when the accident occurred. Initial investigation suggests that Saviers drove onto the right shoulder, then steered to the left quickly causing the SUV to spin out of control. The Jeep left the road and landed upside-down partially submerged in the swampy overflow from Rock Creek.

Three adult passengers were able to get out of the Jeep and called to a nearby residence for help. Saviers was trapped in the SUV in several feet of water, secured by his seatbelt. The temperature was only about 35 degrees, deputies reported.

Just two minutes after the 911 call, Deputy Dan Nuehleck arrived on scene. Not knowing how deep the near-freezing water was, or how soft the bottom was, he immediately jumped into the frigid chest-deep water to free the driver.

Muehleck found Saviers unconscious, pulled him from the Jeep and brought him to the edge of the road where they were met by Tualatin Valley Fire & Rescue medics who attempted to revive him.

Saviers was pronounced dead at the scene, deputies said, adding that alcohol appears to have contributed to the crash. The investigation is continuing.

Two of the passengers were taken to the hospital for treatment of possible hypothermia, and the third refused treatment, the news release stated.

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