

Four family members killed in head-on crash

by Cheryl McDermott

A father and three children of a Nampa, Idaho family died Friday evening when their SUV collided head-on with a commercial truck and trailer on Highway 95, about 15 miles north of the Oregon-Nevada border. Both vehicles caught fire after the crash and were destroyed, Oregon State Police (OSP) reported.

An investigation into the cause of a head-on crash between an SUV and a commercial truck & trailer that killed four Nampa, ID family-members Friday is continuing. OSP photo Troopers from the Ontario Area Command office assisted by an OSP crash reconstructionist are continuing the investigation to determine the cause of the crash.

Shortly before 6 p.m. on May 25, a 2002 Chevrolet Suburban occupied by the four victims was traveling south on Highway 95 near milepost 107 when it crashed into a 2007 Peterbilt towing a semi-trailer full of clothing items. Both vehicles caught fire and were destroyed after the SUV went off the west side of the road, and the truck stayed in the center of the highway. Troopers report that the collision occurred near the center of the highway.

Three victims were pronounced dead at the scene: driver Joseph John Koudelka IV, 42; Justin Koudelka, 11; and Joshua Koudelka, 14. 17-year-old Joseph Koudelka V survived the crash but died enroute to a Winnemucca, Nevada hospital.

The truck driver, identified as Lloyd Roger Putman, 52, of Kuna, Idaho, was not injured.

Assistance at the scene was provided by the sheriff's offices of Malheur County, Oregon and Humboldt County, Nevada; Oregon Department of Transportation, McDermott Fire Department, and Jordan Valley medics. Investigators cleared the scene by 3 a.m. Saturday. Because of fire damage to the pavement, flaggers remained to shuttle traffic through one traffic lane.

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