



Rick Staly, Sheriff

FLAGLER COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

"An honor to serve, a duty to protect."

NEWS RELEASE

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Fleeing Vehicle Burglary Suspects Hit Innocent Motorist **Head-On, Resulting in One Fatality**

BUNNELL, Fla. — Early this morning, Flagler County Sheriff's Office deputies received information that three burglary suspects wanted in St. Johns County had entered Flagler County driving a gray Chevrolet Suburban. This vehicle was later spotted traveling on South Old Kings Road in Palm Coast.

At approximately 12:30 p.m., FCSO deputies observed this same vehicle driving southbound on Interstate 95 at a high rate of speed. The suspect vehicle exited I-95 traveling westbound on Old Dixie Highway, at which time deputies used Stop Sticks to slow the vehicle, but the vehicle had anti-deflating tires, and the Stop Sticks were unsuccessful. The suspect vehicle then fled southbound on U.S. Highway 1 toward I-95 with FCSO deputies attempting to stop the vehicle. While trying to evade law enforcement, the suspect vehicle continued to weave in and out of traffic and, at one point, sideswiped an FCSO vehicle, and then continued to drive recklessly well ahead of law enforcement.

Upon reaching the intersection of I-95 and U.S. 1, the suspect vehicle turned left and entered the I-95 exit ramp, hitting another vehicle head-on. The suspects then fled on foot from the vehicle toward the wood line and were quickly apprehended by law enforcement. Other deputies immediately ran to the motorist's car, attempted to render aid, and requested rescue to respond.

The sole occupant of the second vehicle involved in the crash was airlifted to a nearby hospital in critical condition and later died because of injuries sustained from the crash. The identity of the driver is being withheld pending notification of next of kin.

"It is with great sadness, the actions of these dirtbags resulted in the tragic loss of an innocent life," said Sheriff Rick Staly. "This crime spree started in St. Johns County with vehicle burglaries and ended violently with the death of an innocent person. This death is the direct result of the poor decisions made by these criminals who had no regard for the life of those around them. Although the Florida

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Highway Patrol is conducting a traffic homicide investigation, we will do everything within our power to make sure these suspects are prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. Our heartfelt condolences go out to the victim's loved ones."

FHP is the lead agency investigating the crash. The St. Johns County Sheriff's Office is the lead agency for the vehicle burglaries, and FCSO will review all actions involving FCSO deputies during this incident.

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