

UPDATE: Five Hurt, Three Pinned in 421 Crash

Written by Steve Frank

There were five transported from a Friday night wreck after three were pinned in the two vehicles involved in a major crash in far Western Watauga County. Two SUV's collided just before 8pm on US 421 at Vanderpool Road, and arriving Cove Creek First Responders called for Watauga Rescue as Watauga Medics were en route, but motorists arriving as the wreck occurred were able to pull a 6-month baby from an overturned SUV, opening up the back of the vehicle. They handed the child out to others, and kept the child in a warm car until Medics arrived at the scene. At one point, Cove Creek command called for the smallest rescue members to try to work their way to help others pinned in the vehicles. State trooper Alexander said the wreck occurred as 69-year old Bobby Frank Johnson pulled from Vanderpool Road, his 2004 Jeep Liberty striking the Chevy Blazer Daniel Michael Walker was driving north on 421, causing his Blazer to flip onto its side. Walker, fiancé Jennifer Wolf Jewel, as well as the infant were in the Chevy, and Johnson's wife, Ruth, was also injured in the Jeep. The rescue effort shut down US 421 near the Tennessee line for some time while rescuers cut the three out of the vehicles, then transported all five to Watauga Medical Center. Alexander said that the child seat did its job, saving the 6-month old from any injuries, in spite of being wedged into the wrecked Chevy. He cited Bobby Frank Johnson with Failure to Yield Right of Way in the crash.