

One Killed, Five Hurt in Cove Creek Crash

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A motorcyclist was killed, another airlifted, three others were taken to Watauga Medical Center after the car of a Vilas woman slammed into four motorcycles traveling US 321 in Cove Creek. The 6:20pm crash occurred as the 2003 Audi of Jennifer Willis went left of center as she traveled toward Boone, according to Trooper David Searcy, who spent all evening and into the early morning sorting out the details of the crash. Searcy said the four cycles were on a trip biking from Virginia to Florida, and that the cyclist killed was Alfredo Madrid, 50, was from Miami. He said that the cyclist airlifted to the Johnson City Medical Center by WINGS Air Rescue was able to talk to him about the crash, and that the other cyclists involved included a husband and wife, riding tandem, and he said that Jennifer Willis was also injured and transported to Watauga Medical Center by Watauga Medics and Watauga Rescue as Cove Creek Fire/First Responders helped with the injured, the landing zone for the medivac chopper, and directing traffic as the road was closed for about four hours. Trooper Searcy charged Jennifer Willis with Driving While Impaired, saying she would be released from treatment at the hospital into custody with other charges pending. Sheriff Len Hagaman reported that SHP and Boone PD crash reconstruction teams worked the crash investigation and that the drivable cycles involved in the wreck are stored and secured at the Watauga Sheriff's Office by Patrol Division deputies and WCSO Detectives. He said damaged bikes transported by Hamptons and Bills Garage and stored. He also reported that a local Christian Motorcycle Ministry is providing lodging and sustenance relief to the injured now released from Watauga Medical Center and that the Christian Motorcycle Ministry and Watauga Medical Center chaplains providing spiritual and trauma comfort relief with Watauga Medical Center staff are providing chapel space, rider triage, and rider personal effects security. Hagaman praised the response as "Truly a great coordination of efforts in this tragedy."